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CONFIDENTIAL

(18741)

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

SYRIA

PART 5

January to December 1951

TABLE OF CONTENTS

No. and Name	Date	SUBJECT	Page
General Correspondence			
1 Mr. Montagu-Pollock (Damascus) No. 3	1951 6th Jan.	Annual review for 1950 ... ..	1
2 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 52. Tel.	11th Mar.	Political situation ... .. Background to the political crisis brought about by the intervention in political affairs by Colonel Shishakli.	5
3 Sir K. Helm ... (Tel Aviv) (1) No. 110. Tel. (2) No. 111. Tel.	5th Apr.	Israel-Syrian relations ... .. Report of an incident in the demilitarised zone near El Hamma in which seven Israeli policemen were killed. Conversation with Mr. Shiloah who expressed the serious view taken by his Government of this affair.	6
4 Sir K. Helm ... (1) No. 112. Tel. (2) No. 113. Tel.	6th Apr.	Israel-Syrian relations ... .. Report of retaliatory bombing by the Israeli Air Force in the El Hamma region. Conversation with Mr. Shiloah and the Israeli Chief of Staff who were informed that it was His Majesty's Minister's view that Israel had flagrantly violated the Armistice Agreement by this action.	6
5 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 86. Tel.	11th Apr.	Israel-Syrian relations ... .. Conversation with the Syrian Prime Minister regarding the incident in the demilitarised zone near El Hamma.	7
6 To Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 218. Tel.	19th May	Israel-Syrian frontier dispute ... .. Conversation with the Syrian Minister regarding the appearance of Iraqi aircraft in Syria.	7
7 Mr. Man ... .. (Damascus) No. 264. Tel.	19th Aug.	Proposed Jordan-Iraq union ... .. Conversation between His Majesty's Minister and the Syrian Prime Minister at which the latter said he was convinced of the necessity for union between Iraq and Jordan, which Syria should eventually join.	8
8 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 340. Tel.	11th Nov.	Political situation ... .. An outline of the events leading to the resignation of the Hassan Hakim Government.	9
9 To Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 151	20th Nov.	Conversation between the Secretary of State and Faris Bey El Kheury ... .. Syrian views on the Western proposals for the Middle East Command, the problem of Palestine and the plight of the Arab refugees.	9
10 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 364. Tel.	29th Nov.	Political situation ... .. Formation of a new Cabinet as a result of a <i>coup d'Etat</i> under army auspices: Colonel Shishakli's communiqué.	10
11 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 181	11th Dec.	Political situation ... .. A connected narrative of the events leading up to the Shishakli <i>coup d'Etat</i> of December 1951.	10
12 Sir J. Troutbeck ... (Bagdad) No. 951. Tel.	13th Dec.	Iraq and the Shishakli régime ... .. Disquiet of the Iraqi Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs at the proposed recognition by His Majesty's Government of the Shishakli régime; his fears that the Syrian precedent would encourage ambitious army leaders in other Arab States.	13

TABLE OF CONTENTS

No. and Name	Date	SUBJECT	Page
Appendix—Biographical Notes			
13 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 103	1951 2nd July	Annual report on the leading personalities ... ..	[ 1
14 Mr. Montagu-Pollock No. 115	21st July	Annual report on the heads of foreign missions ... ..	[ 25

SUBJECT INDEX

[The figures denote the serial numbers of the documents]

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS—14.	ISRAEL-SYRIAN RELATIONS— Frontier incident in the El Hamma region—3, 4, 5. Iraqi aircraft in Syria—6.
ANNUAL REPORT ON THE LEADING PERSONALITIES—13.	POLITICAL SITUATION— Colonel Shishakli's <i>coup d'Etat</i> —10, 11. Colonel Shishakli's intervention in political affairs—2.
ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 1950—1.	Hassan Hakim Government, resignation of the—8.
CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND FARIS BEY EL KHEURY—9.	PROPOSED JORDAN-IRAQ UNION, SYRIAN VIEWS ON THE—7.
IRAQI VIEWS ON THE SHISHAKLI REGIME—12.	

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING  
SYRIA—PART 5

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

EY 1011/1

No. 1

SYRIA: ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 1950

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Bevin. (Received 15th January)*

(No. 3. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *6th January, 1951*

I have the honour to transmit the annual review of Syrian affairs for 1950, which has been written by the Hon. Nigel Bruce, Second Secretary at His Majesty's Legation. I have prefaced this by the following impressions of my own based on six months' experience of the country.

2. The Syrian annual review for 1949 ended on a note of pessimism as regards the country's political and economic prospects. But in the event things have gone much better for Syria in 1950 than was anticipated. I attribute this to a combination of circumstances, not all of which are of good augur for the future. One of the more encouraging of these circumstances has been the emergence of Nazim Qudsi, the present Prime Minister, as a politician possessing considerable qualities of statesmanship. When he formed in June 1950 a predominantly People's Party Government, after the fall of Khalid al Azm's coalition Government, it was assumed that the new Government was of a purely stop-gap nature and that it could not survive for more than a few weeks at the most. But it was still in power at the end of the year, having in the meantime steered through the Constituent Assembly a highly progressive new Constitution and having also, by providing the Nationalist opposition with no face-saving excuse to modify the standpoint of uncompromising hostility towards the proposed new régime which it had adopted during the previous year, kept it in a position in which it was powerless to criticise the Government through the normal parliamentary channels and was obliged to fall back on the press and various forms of intrigue. Qudsi is not the type of man who normally gets far in Arab politics. He prefers the cautious approach to the strong hand. But he is a realist who is, above all, mindful of the limi-

tations of his present position. He undoubtedly owes much of his success to the able support from behind the scenes of Rushdi Kekhia, the leader of the People's Party and President of the Assembly. The triumvirate of these two politicians and of the veteran President, Hashim Atassi, has one great advantage in that all three have clean political records.

3. But there is a less encouraging side to the political picture. The army, having carried out three *coups d'Etat* within a period of nine months, has developed an unhealthy appetite for politics, and the Government, which is widely regarded as governing solely by consent of the army, has not faced up to this issue. Qudsi's policy is one of "everything in good time." He hopes that he can carry out a policy which will be acceptable to the army on the one hand and will win public support on the other. If he succeeds he hopes eventually to persuade the army that it no longer has any interest in concerning itself with political affairs. If he fails, *tant pis*: he has never wished to pose as the sole candidate for the post of saviour of Syria. But he is walking on a tight-rope; and it remains to be seen whether the political interests of the army and of the people can be harmonised. If they cannot, then the Nationalists will have the chance which they are waiting for. In the meantime, Qudsi has had one or two near falls, when Lieutenant-Colonel Shishakli, who appears in fact to control the army, has taken the law into his own hands and when the Government, by acquiescing in such conduct, has indicated in whose hands the final authority lay. It is generally believed that Colonel Shishakli is greatly under the influence of his friend, Akram Hourani, the leader of a small party known as the Arab Socialist Party, who was Minister of Defence in Khalid el Azm's last Cabinet. Of all Syrian politicians, Hourani

is the most feared by moderate public opinion. He has concealed neither his profound suspicion of foreign influences nor his bitter hostility towards the large land-owners. Apart from that, no one can foresee what this able and unscrupulous opportunist will do next.

4. This situation is not a healthy one. The fact remains that, had Colonel Shishakli not been influenced throughout the year by Akram Hourani, he might well have listened to the suggestions which he certainly received from the Nationalists and that the army should help them to oust the People's Party régime. As the Nationalist leaders are largely discredited by their previous record, I doubt whether this would have been to Syria's interest. Moreover, much as one dislikes the thought of the Government's dependence on Colonel Shishakli and Akram Hourani, it must be admitted that Syria has benefited by a rest from changes of Government and by the active co-operation of the army in the maintenance of public security. Furthermore, a Government which is dependent on the army probably provides a more effective bulwark against communism than a Government dependent in the main upon civil authority.

5. In the field of foreign affairs, Nazim Qudsi's need to retain the goodwill of the controlling military clique, which, above all, fears any development which would result in the subordination of the Syrian army to another Arab army, resulted in the pursuit of a policy which, given the existing state of affairs in the Arab world, was probably as sensible and as realistic as any which could be devised. It consisted of the affirmation that Syria intended to maintain her independent democratic régime, that she would tolerate no interference from other Arab States in her internal affairs, that her interests were not tied up with any one group of Arab States rather than another, and that, on these bases, she was ready to improve her relations with all the Arab States.

6. But there is a further reason for hesitating before placing great confidence in the present Government: namely, the mediocre quality and the lack of experience of most of its members. The People's Party has a few leaders who inspire respect; but after that it tails off badly. This has resulted in a growing feeling throughout the country that there is a wide gulf between the Government's progressive intentions and their realisation. Moreover, its claim to represent the will of the people is at best

doubtful. The Constituent Assembly was elected in November 1949 for the express purpose of forming a new Constitution. In September 1950 it saw fit to turn itself into a Parliament without a mandate from the people. It was probably wise to do so. But the step could hardly be said to conform to legal democratic practice.

7. In the economic field, as is indicated in further detail in the enclosure to this despatch, Syria has also benefited from this period of relative political stability. Still more, she has benefited from an excellent harvest, combined with a boom in cotton prices which has resulted in an enthusiasm for the cultivation of this crop which is in danger of over-reaching itself. With these unexpected trump cards in her hand, she has strengthened her economic position *vis-à-vis* the Lebanon in a somewhat ruthless manner. Apart from this, Nazim Qudsi has displayed a genuine and encouraging preoccupation with problems of economic development and reform, combined with a more receptive attitude towards offers of economic assistance from the West. But these developments and reforms are as yet mere intentions, and it remains to be seen whether they will be carried out. The one concrete step taken by the Syrian Government which has already paid a dividend was taken at the expense of the Lebanon. Apart from this, for her improved economic state during the year, Syria has to thank not the Government but the weather, world agricultural prices and private initiative.

I have, &c.

W. H. MONTAGU-POLLOCK.

Enclosure in No. 1

*Annual Political Review of Syria, 1950*

Syria is one of the youngest members of the family of nations and it is therefore permissible to speak of 1950 as a year of normal growth. Although the outlook for the future had been rather bleak at the close of 1949, she made real, if slight, progress towards achieving stability and regained a degree of self-confidence. The outstanding achievement of the year was the completion of a new Constitution. Until the progressive legislation is passed which the Constitution requires, however, this must be considered as theoretical advance only; more practical evidence of growth was to be seen in the country's economic life. The army, overplaying the rôle of protector of the nation's sovereignty and of her Republican régime,

showed no signs of developing a sense of responsibility by ceasing to meddle in politics, in spite of frequent statements to the contrary; while the Syrian press, like a spoilt child, continued to cry for the moon.

2. Economically and socially undeveloped though Syria is, her people are cheerful and alert. There is little destitution and there are, at the other extreme, few irresponsible capitalists. Her administration is relatively honest, though lacking in experience. Ambitious plans are discussed for abolishing illiteracy and creating a national health scheme, for spreading agricultural knowledge and protecting the soil, but official action in pursuit of these objectives is dwarfed by the size of the problem and the volume of routine administration. Agriculture flourished in 1950. The record cotton crop, some 40,000 tons of ginned cotton, coinciding with high market prices, brought in high profits, and the State benefited proportionately from the production tax. Customs receipts were well above those of 1949, when Syria was linked in a customs union with the Lebanon, the port of Lattakia handled twice as much cargo and Aleppo regained a considerable volume of trade at the expense of Beirut. Syria's balance of external payments for 1950 is estimated to have been only slightly unfavourable, although accurate figures are not available. Trade and payments agreements of a simple character were concluded in the course of the year with Saudi Arabia and Egypt and negotiations were started with Germany and Iraq. Agreement was reached with the Iraq Petroleum Company for the construction of a new 30-inch pipeline from Kirkuk to the small Syrian port of Baniyas; the benefits which Syria will derive include the development of Baniyas, the purchase of 200,000 tons of crude oil a year at a special rate, and transit dues, guarding dues and loading charges totalling some £300,000 a year. The company also undertake to construct a refinery at Baniyas if no other company offers to do so within five years. As a result of these and other factors, Syria claims a budget surplus in 1950. The country needs capital investment but chronic xenophobia forces any Syrian Government to be cautious about obtaining a foreign loan. The visit to Syria of a mission from the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development towards the end of the year therefore set an important precedent.

3. The favourable economic situation strengthened the political leaders in their struggle, continued throughout the year, to

keep the Syrian army out of internal affairs. The first necessity was to restore constitutional life to the country by drafting a new Constitution and then replacing the Constituent Assembly by a Parliament. The committee charged with this task, under the chairmanship of Nazim Qudsi, laid its final draft before the Constituent Assembly in April. Unfortunately it was greeted with vigorous criticism from many quarters, the main bone of contention being the relationship between the State and the Islamic religion; the resignation from the Cabinet of Akram Hourani, Minister of Defence, indicated that the army was losing confidence in Khaled el Azm's leadership. The Prime Minister left Damascus in May for a meeting of the Political Committee of the Arab League and unwisely prolonged his absence by visits to Riyadh and Beirut. He failed to rally sufficient support on his return and his Cabinet therefore resigned. The People's Party, which had a majority both in the Assembly and the committee, decided to push the Constitution through, even at the cost of concessions to their critics. At the beginning of June Nazim Qudsi formed a government of five members of the People's Party and three independents, whose sole declared objective was the passage of the Constitution. Tentative negotiations into which the People's Party entered with the Nationalist *bloc*, which had boycotted the 1949 elections, showed that the latter still aimed at the return of ex-President Quwatli. Realising that agreement was impossible, the Nationalist *bloc* launched a political offensive against the Constituent Assembly, the effect of which was only to spur it into action. On 5th September the new Constitution came into force. Hashim Atassi, head of the Syrian State since December 1949, was elected President of the Republic, and the Constituent Assembly became the Syrian Parliament.

4. The new Constitution provides a well-constructed scaffolding on which democratic and progressive legislation may be built if Syria can find political stability. Among the worthy objectives which it sets are the creation of a permanent economic council or development board, the reform and extension of local government, the abolition of illiteracy in ten years and the settlement of the nomadic tribes in the same space of time. It makes the Government responsible for providing work and healthy houses for all and demands a system of social insurance. It creates an Office of Inspection which is designed to prevent a recurrence of the

ministerial corruption familiar in the past and it gives evidence of a realistic liberalism by permitting the formation of political parties only if their aims are lawful, their methods peaceful and their organisation democratic.

5. Although Syria was spared any further military *coups* in 1950, she witnessed further intrigues, plots and acts of terrorism. On all such occasions it became embarrassingly clear that the army leaders considered themselves to be above the law, and for this they earned popular odium. In July the commander of the air force was murdered in circumstances which gravely implicated the ruling military clique. In August a law was passed by the Constituent Assembly, which did little more than face the inevitable by declaring a general amnesty covering all political crimes committed during the period of the three *coups* of 1949. In September the military authorities arrested a colonel and a Member of Parliament on charges of conspiracy with the Jordan Government. In October an attempt on the life of Lieutenant-Colonel Shishakli led to the exposure of a terrorist group financed by Egyptian and Saudi-Arabian agents and once again it was the Military Prosecutor who was designated to investigate the case. Thus the Syrian army, weakened though it was by internal rivalries, continued to behave as an inner government throughout the year.

6. Relations with the Lebanon, which were frigid at the end of 1949, became even colder during 1950. In March the Syrian Government, feeling that the Lebanon was profiting overmuch from Syria's export and import trade, demanded either full economic unity or the termination of the Customs Union which had been in force since 1943. The Lebanese refused full unity and seemed surprised and hurt when customs barriers appeared on the common frontier. Negotiations which opened in June moved slowly and although both parties claimed that they had benefited from the separation, Syria's steadily improving economic position showed where the long-term advantage lay. As a result of failure to reach agreement, political relations deteriorated and the presence in the Lebanon of Jamil Mardam, an ex-Prime Minister now in voluntary exile, suggested that the Lebanese Government might be working for the Nationalist Opposition in Syria. Although a limited agreement for the exchange of local produce subject to normal tariffs was reached towards the end of the year, there seems little chance of closer integration between the economic

liberalisation of the Lebanon and the Syrian preference for a controlled economy.

7. Syria's Arab policy still steered uneasily between the Hashemite camp and the Cairo-Riyadh axis, but the swing of the pendulum was less pronounced than last year. The almost simultaneous exposures of intrigues inspired by each camp offered an opportunity for Syria to take the initiative; Nazim Qudsi therefore visited all the Arab capitals in the space of a month in an earnest attempt to prove that Syria was not a passive prize to be won by the strongest competitor but an active force for mediation and cohesion in the Arab world. Syrian policy throughout the year was firmly based on that of the Arab League. She adopted the orthodox Arab stand in opposition to peace with Israel except on the basis of the 1947 Partition Plan and the repatriation and compensation of refugees. She was antagonistic to Jordan's bid to make a separate peace. She voted with the majority of the Arab League against recognition of the union of both banks of Jordan, whilst in practice accepting it with good grace as an accomplished fact. She co-operated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency within the limits proscribed by the League. She signed the Treaty of Joint Defence and Economic Co-operation, and seeing it rendered ineffective by the opposition of Iraq and Jordan she asked the Arab League urgently to consider modifications which would satisfy all parties.

8. Throughout the year the Syrian Government showed itself well disposed towards His Majesty's Government and generally receptive to advice on administrative matters. On matters of policy it was obliged to pay due attention to the force of Nationalist and Isolationist opinion in the country. Thus, while the Government was privately realistic over the issue of British troops in the Canal Zone, press and Parliament voiced loyal support for Egypt. The Syrian army was less co-operative and continued to show profound suspicion of British motives; in particular, they insinuated that Britain was deliberately starving them of arms and equipment. The visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh showed, however, that there is no lack of potential goodwill and friendliness on the army's part. There was no official reaction, either from the Government or from the army to the Tripartite Declaration of 25th May concerning the stability of the Middle East. The Prime Minister being out of the country at the time, the press was at first cautious, but later, encouraged by comments

in Egypt and Iraq, it voiced strong suspicion of the intentions underlying the declaration and the belief that one of its purposes was to earmark Syria as a French sphere of influence has not yet died out.

9. There exists a fund of gratitude towards Britain which even the birth of Israel has not entirely exhausted. France is still suspected and feared, although her assistance in training and equipping the armed forces is used unhesitatingly. America is generally regarded as the foster-parent of Israel, who can only regain Syria's friendship if she changes her policy and tries to make amends. It was for this reason that a statement hostile to America made in Cairo in April by Marouf Dawalibi, at that time Syrian Minister of National Economy, was received with unanimous applause by the Syrian press. Moreover, it was the bitter memory of Palestine which prevented Syria from giving unqualified support to United Nations action in Korea. Permission was nevertheless given for the Royal Air Force to fly troop-carrying aircraft to the scene of battle

across Syrian territory. In spite of the occasional temptation to play the West off against Russia, the army, the Government and the xenophobe politicians were united in their hostility to communism. The illegal Communist Party was treated with some leniency, but those responsible justified this policy with the argument that social and economic progress was the most effective weapon against communism.

10. Syrian policy has shown sympathy and loyalty towards the young nations of the East, and particularly to those where Islam flourishes. Diplomatic representation was exchanged with Pakistan and India early in the year and a Treaty of Friendship with the former was signed in Karachi in August. A similar Treaty of Friendship with Afghanistan was signed in Damascus in October and in the same month a small delegation was sent to attend the Islamic Economic Conference in Tehran. Syria announced her recognition of the United States of Indonesia in January.

EY 1015/2

No. 2

## POLITICAL SITUATION

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Bevin. (Received 11th March)*

(No. 52)

*Damascus,*

(Telegraphic)

*11th March, 1951.*

I learn that the Syrian Prime Minister handed in the resignation of his Government on 9th March, but that the President is endeavouring to persuade him to withdraw it. An official communiqué issued this morning merely states that the President has asked the Government to carry on pending consultations with political leaders.

2. Publicly the crisis is still shrouded in mystery, but I am reliably informed that it is the result of the Prime Minister's impatience with the continued intervention of Colonel Shishakli and his military associates. The latter visited the headquarters of the Opposition Liberal Republican *bloq* just before the foreign affairs debate in the Assembly on 7th March at which the Prime Minister was known to be seeking a vote of confidence. Although the Prime Minister was eventually persuaded to withdraw his demand for a vote of confidence he was much criticised by the Opposition in the course of the debate, and it appears that he attributed this largely to military intrigue.

It is also understood that in a subsequent stormy meeting between the Prime Minister and Colonel Shishakli the latter objected both to the Prime Minister's proposals for an Arab Collective Security pact in which the Syrian army might be subordinated to a foreign command, and to the Syrian Government's association with the Arab League's protest over Morocco, which might in Colonel Shishakli's view lead to the suspension of French deliveries of arms. I am told that the Prime Minister informed Colonel Shishakli that if he wished to behave like Franco he had better take full responsibility for the political direction of the country.

3. It is difficult to foresee how the crisis will be solved, Rushdi Kekhia, leader of the People's Party, has informed the press that his party is not prepared to resume power in the present circumstances, and it was not [group omitted] be easy to form a coherent Government without its co-operation.

4. In view of the crisis, no delegation has left for Cairo to attend the meeting of the Political Committee of the Arab League.

EE 1091/41

No. 3

## ISRAEL-SYRIAN RELATIONS

(1)

*Sir K. Helm to Mr. Morrison. (Received 5th April)*

(No. 110) *Tel Aviv,*  
(Telegraphic) *5th April, 1951.*

According to to-day's papers, seven Israel policemen were killed, three wounded and one captured on evening of 4th April when police patrol in two vehicles were on routine duty in demilitarised zone salient near El Hamma south-east of Sea of Galilee. Patrol seems to have encountered

road block in narrow gorge but reports are not conclusive whether fire came from within zone itself or from Syrian post, which I am authoritatively informed overlooks road at distance of 20 metres. Press claims that firing was done by Syrian troops who also allegedly fired on United Nations observers.

See my immediately following telegram.

EE 1091/42

(2)

*Sir K. Helm to Mr. Morrison. (Received 5th April)*

(No. 111) *Tel Aviv,*  
(Telegraphic) *5th April, 1951.*

My immediately preceding telegram. When I took Sir A. Kirkbride to call this morning on Mr. Shiloah he had just come from the conference with the Prime Minister and Chief of Staff in Jerusalem. Israelis will certainly take serious view of this affair but Shiloah, who was quite calm, gave no hint of the action which the Israel Cabinet were deliberating while we spoke.

2. Shiloah did say however that the chairman (Frenchman) of the Syrian M.A.C. (who had previously been chairman of the Egyptian M.A.C.) had lost grip and in the Israel view has some responsibility for the recent troubles. The Israel Government would probably ask for his

immediate replacement. It was regretted that both Riley and Dr. Ritter were out of action.

3. I cannot contact the United Nations observers to obtain unbiased statement of facts without sending somebody like the military attaché into the area. This I do not favour. Perhaps the United Nations M.A.C. officials could be contacted in Beirut as I think they have gone there from Jerusalem. Shiloah had little material to add to the press reports. I gather that full report is still awaited from the area which was only reached after midnight.

4. In reply to my question Shiloah did say that though Israel police patrolled the El Hamma salient infrequently, yesterday was not their first visit.

EE 1091/39

No. 4

## ISRAEL-SYRIAN RELATIONS

(1)

*Sir K. Helm to Mr. Morrison. (Received 6th April)*

(No. 112) *Tel Aviv,*  
(Telegraphic) *6th April, 1951.*

My telegram No. 111.

It is officially announced that Syrian posts in and adjoining demilitarised zone where previous day's attack occurred were bombed last evening by Israel Air Force aircraft in retaliation.

2. Israel has notified Acting Chief of Staff of refusal to attend further M.A.C. meetings until Syrians stop shooting.

3. Israel is stated to be lodging strong protest with Security Council against flagrant Syrian violation of armistice agreement.

4. Please see my immediately following telegram.

EE 1091/40

(2)

*Sir K. Helm to Mr. Morrison. (Received 6th April)*

(No. 113) *Tel Aviv,*  
(Telegraphic) *6th April, 1951.*

My immediately preceding telegram.

Israel Chief of Staff, Secretary-General and Shiloah dined with me last night. Yadin then told me about "retaliatory" Israel action.

2. In the presence of the other two and of the American Counsellor and Sir Alex Kirkbride, I expressed great regret. I remarked that Syrians had appeared to be in the wrong

but that by taking the law into her own hands regarding events in the demilitarised zone Israel had in my opinion in turn flagrantly violated the Armistice Agreement. Yadin claimed that Israel could not have her policemen shot on Israel territory without retaliation.

I questioned whether the demilitarised zone was Israel territory and pointed out that the responsibility authority for it is the chairman of the M.A.C.

EE 1083/44

No. 5

## ISRAEL-SYRIAN RELATIONS

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Morrison. (Received 11th April)*

((No. 86) *Damascus,*  
(Telegraphic) *11th April, 1951.*

As I am still indisposed I asked Mr. Man to see the Syrian Prime Minister this morning. Mr. Man took the opportunity to convey, in general terms, the message contained in your telegram No. 105, as repetition to me of Tel Aviv telegram No. 109 to you, was delayed and did not reach me until 8th April. Action on your telegram No. 117 was taken on 8th April, and similar approaches to the Syrian Government have been made by the United States and French Legations.

2. The Prime Minister was grateful for these communications, and said that Syria continued to rely on the intervention of His Majesty's Government and United States and French Governments with the Israeli Government to persuade the latter to desist from further provocative acts and to leave it to the United Nations to settle the dispute. Syria, for her part, had scrupulously refrained from any provocative action, and realised that the Israel Government were deliberately tempting Syria to

make a false step and thereby prejudice the Syrian case in the Security Council. Although things were quieter, only yesterday an Israel armed force had attacked the village of Nugheib on Lake Tiberias in the demilitarised zone and had removed the inhabitants. The Syrian army were, however, maintaining iron discipline, and would not take any action in violation of the Armistice Agreement.

3. Mr. Man referred to statements made by Khalid Al Azm yesterday to correspondent of the *Daily Express* that the Syrian army would fire on any Israel police or military formations attempting to occupy El Hamma. The Prime Minister said that this was so and that Syria could never tolerate such an attempt by the Israelis. Mr. Man warned the Prime Minister of the serious consequences which might ensue from such action by the Syrian army which would damage the Syrian case in the Security Council. The Prime Minister said that he fully appreciated the need for the utmost restraint, but there was a limit to Syrian forbearance.

EE 1083/225

No. 6

## ISRAEL-SYRIAN RELATIONS

*Mr. Morrison to Mr. Montagu-Pollock (Damascus)*

((No. 218) *Foreign Office,*  
(Telegraphic) *19th May, 1951.*

Tel Aviv telegrams Nos. 191 and 192.

The Syrian Minister in London was asked to call to-day and informed as follows.

2. Our information suggests that the Israel Government are concerned at the appearance of Iraqi aircraft in Syria and seem to fear that the Syrian Government might take the passage of the Security

Council Resolution as an invitation to take aggressive action against Israel. There is therefore some talk in Israel of a partial mobilisation. We, ourselves, did not believe that the Syrian Government had any aggressive intentions. We were, however, concerned lest the tension between the two countries should be again heightened by unfounded apprehensions on either side. We thought, therefore, that it might be helpful if the Syrian Prime Minister were to make a public declaration, or failing that give us a private assurance which we could pass to the Israel Government, that his Government, while prepared to defend Syria against aggression, had themselves no aggressive intentions.

3. The Syrian Minister expressed the personal view that the issue of the Declaration in such terms should present no difficulty to his Government, whose known

policy it, in fact, represented. He enquired whether, however, the statement should include a passage reserving the Syrian Government's position if the Israel Government did not accept the Security Council Resolution. He was told that in our view this would be a mistake, since the action to be taken in the event of the Israel Government refusing to comply with the resolution (which in fact we thought unlikely) would be a matter for the Security Council and not for Syria. He appeared to take this point.

4. He was also told that we felt it would be an advantage if the Iraqi air units, whose advent in Syria we had deprecated, could be withdrawn as soon as possible.

5. Minister undertook to telegraph in this sense to his Government. You may at discretion speak in similar terms to them if you think it desirable.

No. 7

#### PROPOSED JORDAN-IRAQ UNION

*Mr. Mun to Mr. Younger. (Received 20th August)*

(No. 264. Confidential) *Damascus.*  
(Telegraphic) 19th August, 1951.

Your telegram No. 401.

Opportunity to convey your views occurred this morning in the course of my first [group undecypherable ? official] call on the new Syrian Prime Minister.

2. I spoke as instructed, but the Prime Minister was not at all discouraged. He took almost the identical line he had taken with my Iraqi colleague (my telegram No. 259) and asked me to inform you in strict confidence that he was convinced beyond all doubt of the necessity for union between Iraq and Jordan in order to save the latter from Israel. Result of powerful combination of united Hashemite Kingdom plus Syria would prevent Israel from breaking out of her frontiers. The logical thing was for Syria eventually to join up with United Hashemite Kingdom. It was ridiculous and dangerous for Syria to absorb Jordan and thus risk her safety by extending her frontiers with Israel (this is the point my French colleague has also made to Colonel Shishakli).

3. I repeated word for word paragraph 4 (ii) and (iii) of your telegram No. 720 to

Bagdad, but the Prime Minister remained unconvinced that His Majesty's Government did not [group undecypherable ? secretly] favour union between Jordan and Iraq. As regards paragraph 4 (iii) of your telegram No. 720 to Bagdad he said His Majesty's Government could get over this difficulty by preparing the ground with [group undecypherable ? Egypt] and Saudi Arabia with the help of America whose co-operation over the union was essential.

4. I had similar conversations with Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi of the Independent Party a few days ago. Both fully [? group omitted] Prime Minister's views and his attitude regarding His Majesty's Government's real intentions. They point out that there was no such thing in the Middle East as the "wishes of people" which were created by those in power and not *vice versa*.

5. Should the Prime Minister or any other Syrians again revert to the subject, I will do my best to put them right, but I feel bound to point out that the Arab would not be an Arab if he accepted His Majesty's Government's views on union at their face value.

EY 1016/23

No. 8

#### POLITICAL SITUATION

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Eden. (Received 11th November)*

(No. 340. Confidential) *Damascus.*  
(Telegraphic) 11th November, 1951.

Government of Hassan Hakim resigned on 10th November but is continuing in office pending the formation of a new Cabinet. Following is outline of events.

2. The crisis was provoked by the Foreign Minister's speech of 23rd October which was made without the Prime Minister's authority (see my telegram No. 306). The latter at once attempted to resign, but the President and Qudsi persuaded him not to insist.

3. The Prime Minister then issued his forthright counter-statement about not being influenced by street politicians (see my telegram No. 332). This made differences within the Cabinet more acute and the crisis was averted only by the suspension by Qudsi of Parliament sittings for a week. All parties of the Left, including the Left-wing People's Party dominated by Dawalibi, were out for the Prime Minister's blood and began organising daily demonstrations of students and riff-raff of the town, condemning him and branding the Four Powers as imperialists.

4. The moderate leaders of People's Party as the largest political group in Parliament were in a quandary. They respected the Prime Minister and privately shared his views. They had not initiated the speech of the Foreign Minister, who, though member of the party, has never been amenable to party discipline. They still nursed the hope that the crisis could be avoided as they had no wish to take direct responsibility for the country's policy at the moment. But they were not prepared to meet Prime Minister's insistence that his declared policy should receive their wholehearted backing. Such a step would have split the party in two, as the Dawalibi group, which enjoys

strong electoral support both in Aleppo and Damascus, was in open revolt.

5. At this moment it appears that Kekhia in a desperate attempt to split the People's Party deliberately brought to a head the issue of primary control of gendarmerie on which all members of the party were united in opposition to Colonel Shishakli. This led to the resignation of the Minister of the Interior, a member of the People's Party, as a protest against Shishakli's refusal to relinquish control of gendarmerie.

6. But this move failed to restore party discipline over the question of Middle East Command so that the Prime Minister had no alternative but to insist on resigning. On his departure he arranged for broadcasting a further statement in which he reaffirmed that the crisis was due to his differences with Lebanon over the Government policy *vis-à-vis* the command and pleaded for moderation and careful reflection.

7. The part played by Shishakli in this crisis is obscure. He is widely believed to have prompted the Foreign Minister's speech but I am inclined to question this. I doubt whether he wishes to identify himself with a pro-Western or anti-Western group at this stage. His first interests are to secure passage of the budget on which his rearmament programme depends and to prevent the formation of a Government strong enough to resist his power.

8. The outcome of the crisis is difficult to predict. The Parliament debate has again been postponed until 19th November to allow time for further inter-party negotiations. The reluctance of any one political group to assume direct responsibility for the country's policy at this time remains a dominating factor in the situation.

EY 1051/15

No. 9

#### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND FARIS BEY EL KHOURY

(1) Fall of Syrian Government; (2) Western Proposals for Defence of Middle East; (3) Palestine; (4) Arab Refugee Problems

*Mr. Eden to Mr. Montagu-Pollock (Damascus)*

(No. 151. Confidential) *Foreign Office.*  
Sir, 20th November, 1951.

The leader of the Syrian Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly came to see me in Paris on 12th November.

2. I asked Faris Bey el Khoury what was behind the fall of his Government. He said that his Prime Minister was a very courageous man, but that the rest of the Cabinet, led by the Foreign Minister, were



against him on the question of our Middle East Command proposals. The Syrian President was, however, anxious that the Prime Minister should himself form another Cabinet.

3. Faris Bey said that we had not presented our defence proposals in the right way. The people of Syria were by no means opposed to the Anglo-Saxon countries, nor did they have strong anti-Soviet feelings; they had, in fact, very little feeling at all about the Soviet Union. The threat of aggression to them was not from Russia but from Israel.

4. The British, and more particularly the Americans, he said, had not done enough about the Palestine problem. It was not

right of the Americans to expect the Arabs to agree to a partition line decided by the Jews by force. Faris Bey described at length the plight of the Arab refugees, and spoke somewhat bitterly of the effects of a large-scale immigration movement into Palestine.

5. I said that I, too, personally felt strongly about the refugee question, and I promised to look into it as soon as I could to see if I could not think of any way in which we could help.

I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Beirut, Bagdad, Amman, Tel Aviv, Cairo, B.M.E.O. (Fayid) and Ankara.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

EY 1015/28

No. 10

### POLITICAL SITUATION

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Eden. (Received 29th November)*

(No. 364) *Damascus.*  
(Telegraphic) 29th November, 1951.

Yesterday evening Maruf Dawalibi succeeded in forming Cabinet with full support of People's Party, Independents and Islamic Socialist front. He, himself, took portfolio of Defence. This provoked Syria's fourth *coup d'Etat* in early hours of this morning. Colonel Shishakli has issued communiqué

announcing that army has taken control and making various accusations (including old charge that they are plotting union with Iraq) against People's Party, whose leaders, together with some Independents, are believed to be in gaol.

2. Damascus is calm and troops and armoured cars control key points. I am informed that Lebanese frontier is open.

EY 1015/78

No. 11

### EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE COUP D'ETAT IN SYRIA

*Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Eden (Received 21st December)*

(No. 181. Confidential) *Damascus.*  
Sir, 11th December, 1951.

In a series of letters and telegrams I have endeavoured to keep you abreast of the events that have led to the fourth *coup d'Etat* that has taken place in Syria since Husni Zaim set the fashion on 29th March, 1949, and I now have the honour to set out in this despatch a connected narrative of these events.

2. As you are aware, since the third *coup d'Etat* in December 1949, Governments have remained in office only so long as the Chief of the General Staff, Colonel Adib Shishakli, suffered them to do so. He was able to exercise his control because he alone had

force behind him. This state of affairs was not unnaturally galling to the politicians, and the People's Party in particular, who were the largest single group in the Chamber, were most anxious to end it. It seemed that a beginning might be made by bringing the gendarmerie and the Tribal Control Force under the orders of the Minister of the Interior instead of those of the Minister of Defence who, for the last eighteen months, had always been an army officer. The question of parliamentary control of army expenditure by means of the budget was another one on which the People's Party hoped to gain ground at the army's expense. The army, of course, resisted

these encroachments on its powers, with the result that the gendarmerie question remained unsettled and the budget is in suspense. Another obstacle to co-operation on a basis of mutual confidence between the army and the People's Party consisted in the latter's reputation of favouring ultimate union with Iraq. Some of the Independents were even more compromised in the eyes of the military on this subject than were the People's Party, and nearly all of them resented army interference. The Republican *bloc* were generally on good terms with Colonel Shishakli, but the Islamic Socialists (Moslem Brotherhood) inclined towards the politicians. The smaller parties, Akram Hourani's Arab Socialists, the Ba'ath, who are closely tied to him, and the P.P.S. seem to have been ready to side with the army. The Arab Socialists are extensively penetrated by the illegal Communist Party. The Nationalist *bloc*, having boycotted the election in 1949, were not represented in the Chamber. While opposed in principle to army interference, they watched developments in the hopes of being able to draw personal advantage from them.

3. Such was the political scene when on 23rd October the Foreign Minister, Faidi Atassi, a People's Party member of uncertain loyalty, made a speech in Parliament on the subject of the Four-Power plan for a Middle East Command in which he strongly attacked the Western Powers but did not reject the plan. The Prime Minister, Hassan Hakim, a moderate and widely respected independent who felt that the need for co-operation with the West was more urgent than the need to prevent the intervention of the army in politics, wished to resign immediately on the grounds that the speech was not in accordance either with the instructions given to Faidi Atassi or with Syria's interests. He was persuaded by the President and by the People's Party leaders, Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi, to remain in office. However, he felt obliged to make his own pro-Western sentiments known on several occasions and thereby widened the cracks in the structure of his Government. It tottered for some days but finally fell on 10th November.

4. By this time the question of the control of the gendarmerie had again become acute and the Minister of the Interior threatened to resign on this issue. Nevertheless, I have no doubt at all it was the foreign policy issue that brought down Hassan Hakim's Cabinet. I am equally sure that it was the issue of army control that

first prevented the formation of a new Government and that ultimately provoked Colonel Shishakli to use force.

5. After the resignations of the Hakim Cabinet the President first sent for Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi. They still declined to accept the Premiership but put up a list of members of their party whom they were willing to support. The list apparently contained none of the party's stars. The first name chosen by the President was that of Zaki Khatib, an undistinguished ex-Minister. He evidently succeeded in completing a Cabinet drawn from the second eleven of the People's Party and a few Independents, but his declared intention of giving the Ministry of Defence to a civilian and of bringing the gendarmerie under the control of the Ministry of the Interior was too much for President Atassi who, all through the crisis, has shown himself opposed to drastic measures and, above all, to the policy of the leaders of the People's Party of forcing on to the shoulders of others the responsibility for implementing their own policy. It is reported that he actually refused to sign the decrees appointing Zaki Khatib's Cabinet to office, and this is probably true. In any case Zaki Bey stepped down and the President sent for Ma'ruf Dawalibi, a member of the Left-wing of the party and notorious for a tendency to make pro-Soviet statements. As he was not in the list submitted by the People's Party and was known to be on good terms with the army, I deduce that the President chose him, albeit with great reluctance, as being the most likely member of the People's Party to be able to bring about a compromise. He failed, however, to satisfy either side and was rejected by both.

6. The President's mind then began to turn towards the possibility of dissolving the Chamber. This, however, would have meant elections held with the gendarmerie still under army control, which can hardly have been attractive to the People's Party. The President kept trying to find a Prime Minister and charged first Saïd Haidar, a nonentity who called himself Independent and then, when he failed to find support, Abdul Baqi Nizamuddin, a pro-army representative of the Republican *bloc*. This drove the People's Party and their supporters among the Independents to bolder action than had hitherto seemed likely. They told the President that they were now ready, with the full support of the Independents and, I have been told by a

Nationalist leader, with the encouragement of the Nationalist *bloc*, to force the issue. They are also believed to have represented to the President that if a Government were formed in the appropriate manner he had no constitutional right to strangle it at birth by refusing to sign the decrees of appointment merely because he did not like its policy. They put up as their candidate Ma'ruf Dawalibi who, as he was this time fighting under the party banner and was pledged to carry out party policy, succeeded in forming a Government consisting of People's Party men, Independents and an Islamic Socialist. Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi still preferred to exercise their control from outside the ring. The new Government let it be known that it was bent on removing Colonel Shishakli and on passing the necessary legislation to prevent the army from exercising any illegitimate control over the political life of the country. Ma'ruf Dawalibi himself took the Ministry of Defence. The President, again acting with great reluctance, signed the necessary decrees and the news was broadcast by the Government radio station.

7. Colonel Shishakli was now faced with a legally constituted Government, pledged to remove him from power. Only force could prevent it from carrying out its intention, so the colonel used force. In the small hours of 29th November all the leading members of the People's Party, including Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi, whose studious avoidance of the limelight was thus of no avail, prominent Independents who were known to be against army control, and all the Dawalibi Cabinet except three, one of whom was the Islamic Socialist representative, were arrested. Even the movements of the President were strictly controlled. Armoured cars and troops controlled Damascus and the country as a whole accepted the *coup* with apparent indifference.

8. Colonel Shishakli's immediate pre-occupation was to find a cloak of legality for his resort to force. While issuing statements accusing the People's Party of various crimes including intrigues with a foreign power—which meant Iraq—the colonel was at the same time occupied with trying to induce the imprisoned Ma'ruf Dawalibi to resign and the President to appoint a substitute. Dawalibi, however, declined to resign and maintained his stand for three days under considerable pressure. The President, during this time, was trying his best to find a solution and thereby avoid

disorder, but was becoming more and more aware of the difficulty of appearing to condone the army's action. Eventually, on 1st December, it was announced on the radio that Ma'ruf Dawalibi had resigned and that the President had requested a member of the Republican *Bloc* to form an administration; it was assumed that the purpose of this administration would be to arrange for the Chamber to be dissolved and for elections to be held.

9. The following day, 2nd December, the President himself resigned and Colonel Shishakli assumed the functions of Head of State. The announcement stated that Colonel Shishakli was authorised to issue decrees by the Supreme War Council, a body composed of prominent colonels officially concerned with defence and, of course, entirely subservient to Colonel Shishakli who, I am informed, did not bother to consult the members before making his *coup*.

10. The army were undoubtedly sorry to see the President go since, so long as he was there, some vestige of legality might have been preserved for the new régime. His resignation, which I am assured was voluntary and caused by the impossibility of the position in which he found himself, forced Colonel Shishakli into that limelight which proved dangerous for both his predecessors, Husni Zaim and Sami Hinnawi, and which Rushdi Kekhia and Nazim Qudsi had so carefully shunned. He did not, however, remain there for long. Announcing on 3rd December that he was a simple soldier anxious to defend his country against the intrigues of the People's Party and their foreign friends, he put up, after one day, his henchman Colonel Fawzi Silo to be Chief of State and Prime Minister of a Government of which the senior civil servants of the various ministries became acting members. He then climbed back into his accustomed place in the back seat. The *coup* was successfully accomplished and all effective power was in Colonel Shishakli's hands.

11. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs have informed all diplomatic missions here in writing that this internal event would not lead to any change in Syrian foreign policy or international relations. Subsequently Colonel Shishakli stated in a press conference that brotherly co-operation with the other Arab States, and especially Egypt, would continue and that Syria's decision regarding the Middle East Command would be in accordance with her interests and would be influenced by the attitude of the other Arab States. In answer to a question

he added that the new régime did not need fresh recognition since it was a continuation of the past.

12. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Bagdad,

Beirut, Amman, Jedda, Cairo, Ankara, Tel Aviv, Paris, Washington and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

W. H. MONTAGU-POLLOCK.

EY 1015/64

No. 12

### IRAQ AND THE SHISHAKLI REGIME IN SYRIA

*Sir J. Troutbeck to Mr. Eden, (Received 13th December, 1951)*

(No. 951)

*Bagdad,*

(Telegraphic)

13th December, 1951.

Damascus telegram No. 389: Syria.

To-morrow being Friday, I informed the Iraqi Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of this recommendation this morning. He expressed grave disquiet particularly on the ground of the precedent that the proposed action would create. He feared that if Shishakli found he could get away with things so easily, army officers in other Arab States would be tempted to follow his example. The greatest danger was, he thought, in Jordan, but in Iraq too there were ambitious officers, despite all the efforts

he had long been making to keep the army out of politics. He was convinced that His Majesty's Government, whose interest in the stability of the Middle East was as great as Iraq's, would make a serious mistake if they were now to open normal relations with this military adventurer who had just put members of the legitimate Government in prison and overthrown the legal President.

2. His Excellency was quite unshaken by the explanation I gave to be the reasons for our contemplated action. I finally promised to report his views to you immediately, but expressed some doubt whether they would reach you in time to influence your decision.

APPENDIX  
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

EY 1012/1

No. 13

LEADING PERSONALITIES IN SYRIA

Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Morrison. (Received 9th July)

(No. 103. Secret) *Damascus,*  
Sir. *2nd July, 1951.*  
With reference to Mr. Man's despatch  
No. 101 of 3rd July, 1950, I have the honour  
to transmit to you herewith my revised  
report on the Leading Personalities in Syria.  
I have, &c.  
W. H. MONTAGU-POLLOCK.

Enclosure

Leading Personalities in Syria

INDEX

- |                                     |                                               |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1. A'as, Shakir.                    | 44. Halabi, Fouad.                            |
| 2. Abusha'at, Sulaiman.             | 45. Hamzeh, Arif.                             |
| 3. Aflaq, Michel.                   | 46. Hariri, Muhammad Khair.                   |
| 4. 'Aidi, Abdul Karim.              | 47. Hariri, Wahbi.                            |
| 5. Ajlani, Munir.                   | 48. Hatim, Anwar.                             |
| 6. Akras, Michel.                   | 49. Hayyani, Taufiq.                          |
| 7. Alexandros III, Tahhan.          | 50. Hefel, Abbud Shaikh.                      |
| 8. Antaki, Naim.                    | 51. Hindieh, Grégoire.                        |
| 9. Aphram I, Mar Ignatius.          | 52. Heraki, Hikmet.                           |
| 10. Armanazi, Najib.                | 53. Homsî, Edmond.                            |
| 11. Arslan, Adil Amir.              | 54. Hourani, Akram.                           |
| 12. Assali, Sabri.                  | 55. Huraiki, Ignatios.                        |
| 13. Assioun, Fathalla.              | 56. Ibish, Nuri.                              |
| 14. Atassi, Adnan.                  | 57. Inglizi, Issam.                           |
| 15. Atassi, Faidi.                  | 58. Ishaq, Said.                              |
| 16. Atassi, Hashim.                 | 59. Jabi, Rushdi.                             |
| 17. Atrash, Hassan Amir.            | 60. Jabri, Ihsan.                             |
| 18. Atrash, Soltan Bin Hamud Pasha. | 61. Jabri, Majduddin.                         |
| 19. Ayesb, Muhammad.                | 62. Jabbara, Hassan.                          |
| 20. Azm, Abdurrahman.               | 63. Jandali, Farhan.                          |
| 21. Azm, Khalid.                    | 64. Jnaid, Muhammad.                          |
| 22. Azmeh, Adil.                    | 65. Kabbara, Sami.                            |
| 23. Azmeh, Nabih.                   | 66. Kahhal, Nuruddin.                         |
| 24. Babil, Nassuh.                  | 67. Kailani, Akram.                           |
| 25. Bikdash, Khalid.                | 68. Kailani, Saadi (Shami Pir).               |
| 26. Bakri, Assad.                   | 69. Kallas, Bahij.                            |
| 27. Barazi, Husni.                  | 70. Kayyali, Abdurrahman.                     |
| 28. Barmada, Mustafa Hilmi.         | 71. Kekhia, Rushdi.                           |
| 29. Barmada, Rashad.                | 72. Khatib, Bahij.                            |
| 30. Barudi, Fakhri.                 | 73. Khatib, Muhammad Subhi.                   |
| 31. Bitar, Salahuddin.              | 74. Khatib, Zaki.                             |
| 32. Buzo, Ali.                      | 75. Khoja, Hamid.                             |
| 33. Daham al Hadi, Shaikh.          | 76. Khouri, Faris.                            |
| 34. Dandashi, Ali Abdul Karim.      | 77. Khouri, Faiz.                             |
| 35. Dawalibi, Ma'ruf.               | 78. Lian, Mikhael Michel.                     |
| 36. Fansa, Nazir.                   | 79. Maizer ibn Abdul Muhsin al Jarba, Shaikh. |
| 37. Farra, Jamal.                   | 80. Maloyan, Hrant.                           |
| 38. Fa'ur, Fa'ur Amir.              | 81. Mardam, Haidar.                           |
| 39. Ghazzi, Said.                   | 82. Mardam, Jamil.                            |
| 40. Halfar, Lutfi.                  | 83. Midani, Abdul Qadir.                      |
| 41. Hajjo, Agha Hassan.             | 84. Milqi, Raif.                              |
| 42. Hakim, Hassan.                  | 85. Mirzo, Ghalib.                            |
| 43. Hakim, Hikmet.                  | 86. Mubarak, Muhammad.                        |
|                                     | 87. Mudarris, Muhammad Khalil.                |
|                                     | 88. Muhammad, Said Agha.                      |
|                                     | 89. Muhasin, Fuad.                            |
|                                     | 90. Mujhim bin Muhaid, Amir.                  |
|                                     | 91. Murabit, Jawad.                           |
|                                     | 92. Murbij, Farid.                            |
|                                     | 93. Morshid, Rakkam Shaikh.                   |
|                                     | 94. Nazif, Amin.                              |
|                                     | 95. Nizamuddin, Abdul Baqi.                   |
|                                     | 96. Qanbar, Ahmad.                            |
|                                     | 97. Qudmani, Fuad.                            |
|                                     | 98. Qudsi, Nazim.                             |
|                                     | 99. Quwatli, Shukri.                          |
|                                     | 100. Ra'ad, Henri.                            |
|                                     | 101. Rayyis, Munir.                           |
|                                     | 102. Rayyis, Najib.                           |
|                                     | 103. Rifai'i, Ahmad.                          |
|                                     | 104. Rikkabi, Akram.                          |
|                                     | 105. Sadat, Munir Dr.                         |
|                                     | 106. Sahnouï, Jean.                           |

107. Saïd, Amin.
108. Sawwaf, Husni.
109. Sayigh, Maxim IV.
110. Sha'alan, Fawwaz Amir.
111. Shalhoub, George.
112. Sharabati, Ahmad.
113. Sharif, Ihsan.
114. Shebat, Anis.
115. Shebat, Fuad.
116. Shehawi, Bahjat Amir.
117. Shehawi, Mustafa Amir.
118. Shshakli, Adib Lieut.-Colonel.
119. Sibai, Hani.
120. Sibai, Mustafa Shaikh.
121. Sidawi, Wadi'.
122. Silo, Fawzi Colonel.
123. Stati, Georgis.
124. Sulh, Afif.
125. Surur, Hayyil Shaikh.
126. Tallas, Assad.
127. Tarazi, Falak (Miss).
128. Tawara, Sami.
129. Yazigi, Taufiq.
130. Zainuddin, Farid.

#### 1. A'as, Shakir

Age about 45. Moslem. Studied economics in America and France and has been connected with various industrial projects in Syria. Counsellor at the Syrian Legation in Paris 1945-46. Prominent member of the Popular Party and editor of the party organ *Es Shaab*, which, after a brief reappearance during the autumn of 1949, ceased to publish as a result of the army's *coup* of December 1949. Elected to Constituent Assembly in 1949 as Deputy for Quneitra, Minister of National Economy and Agriculture in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Became Minister of Finance when Nazim Qudsi reformed his Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

Is said to have Leftish tendencies and to be an opportunist.

#### 2. Abusha'ar, Sulaiman

Born Damascus about 1890. Greek Orthodox. Received his secondary education as a civil engineer in Louvain, Belgium. Has had experience in Mexico. Chief engineer of the Public Works Department, South Syria, transferred August 1944 as Inspector of Public Works. Represented Syria on Communication Committee of Arab League in February 1947. Speaks French and English. Intelligent, capable, straight. Is interested in farming and in the glass and sugar industries. Hot-tempered and dislikes being contradicted. Co-operated fully with British army on their arrival in Syria and dealt very honestly with them. Retired on pension at his own request in May 1949.

#### 3. Afaq, Michel

Born about 1910. A Christian. Had University education in France where he obtained a "licence" in history. While in Paris contributed to a Communist-controlled magazine. On return to Syria taught history in a secondary school and continued to submit Communist articles to the press. In 1938-40 he gathered around him a band of students over whom he had absolute influence and gave them a special series of lectures designed to furnish them with background for an approach to a Communist interpretation of Arab politics. These students formed the nucleus of the Ba'ath el Arabi (Arab Renaissance) Party which he founded in 1940 with the assistance of Salaheddin Bitar who has remained his lieutenant ever since. Stood unsuccessfully with Bitar for election to Parliament in 1943; his election pamphlets at this time opposed the materialism of

the Communists. In 1944, having resigned his post as teacher, he gave a series of lectures (later published in book form) in which he maintained that communism is inapplicable in Moslem countries. Arrested in 1945 for criticism of Shukri Quwatly he supported Quwatly for a short time in his opposition to the French Mandatory power. He was again unsuccessful in the 1947 elections. He then in 1948 opposed Quwatly's election for a second term to the presidency. He successively favoured and opposed the Zaim régime of April-August 1949 and was sent to prison whence he was released upon publication of a recantation and of his determination to leave politics. Following the overthrow of Zaim in August 1949 he was appointed Minister of Education in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet. Resigned in November 1949 and at the same time withdrew his candidature for the second non-Moslem seat in Damascus at the elections for the Constituent Assembly. He and his party have lost ground since then. Left on a protracted visit to South America in the summer of 1950 and has not yet returned.

#### 4. 'Aidi, Abdul Karim

Born 1903. Educated in Dasmascus, but while still a student was sentenced to five years' imprisonment following the Crane Commission incidents and fled to Transjordan, where he met King Ali, whom he accompanied to the Hedjaz. Returned to Damascus in 1927; principal of the Ulmiyeh College 1929-39. Fled to Bagdad to escape arrest by the French, but returned in 1941. Kaimakam of Douma 1943-45. Director of Police, Damascus, April 1945 to May 1946, during which period he was on very friendly terms with the officers of the British Military Security Mission and proved very co-operative. Mohafez of Dera' 1946-47. Appointed Mohafez of Hama December 1948. Was a leading member of the League of National Action and, consequently, works in close harmony with the President and the National Party. He is a close friend of Shukri Quwatly. Appointed Director of Tribal Control in July 1949. Appointed Mohafez of the Euphrates in June 1951.

#### 5. Ajlani, Munir

Son of Darwish Ajlani. Born, Damascus 1910. Studied in France, where he graduated as doctor of law. Author of a book on Syrian Constitution. Elected Deputy 1936. At outset of Nationalist régime he, with Seif ed Din Ma'moun, Ahmad Samman and Mohamed Sarraj, organised the "Iron Shirts" (an organisation based on Nazi Brown Shirts) and was one of the commanders until it was taken over by Nizhat Mamluk 1937. Soon after, the movement was suppressed by French following disorders in Aleppo and Latakia.

Although his age had been amended by Nationalists to enable him to become Deputy (minimum 30), he bitterly opposed Nationalists in Parliament. In 1938 he and Zeki el Khatib were arrested and tried for writing a manifesto attacking Nationalist Government, but were acquitted.

When Dr. Shahbandar returned to Syria, Ajlani supported him and remained one of his intimates until Shahbandar's murder in July 1940, when he gradually ceased his connexion with the party.

In September 1941 he was appointed head of Sheikh Taj ed Din's secretariat, and when on 17th April, 1942, Cabinet was reshuffled Sheikh Taj made him Minister of newly created Ministry of Youth and Propaganda in the Government of Husni Barazi. Was a member of Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943), occupying the same Ministry, the name of which was changed to Ministry of Social Affairs (January 1943). Married on 20th August, 1942, the daughter of Sheikh Taj. Appointed lecturer in Roman law at Damascus Uni-

versity, March 1943. Professor of Law College 1945. Deputy for Damascus 1947. Minister of Education in Jamil Mardam's second Government October 1947. Member of Syrian Delegation to Arab League Conference in Beirut October 1947.

Conceited individual, vacillating yet obstinate. Imprisoned by Zaim for publishing a pro-Hashemite article. Is considered a good speaker by Arabs.

Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. An advocate of union between Syria and her Hashimite neighbours. Ajlani was arrested in September 1950 together with Lieut.-Colonel Bahij Kallas (q.v.) on charges of conspiring against the security of the State with the Jordan Government. After trial by a military tribunal Ajlani was acquitted in January 1951.

#### 6. Altras, Michel

Maronite Archbishop of Aleppo. Born 1877. Educated in the Maronite College at Beirut. Concealed British Consulate archives during the war of 1914-18. Probably the most sincere prelate in the Aleppo area, but neither his health nor influence is strong now. He hopes for the continuance of European influence in Syria.

#### 7. Alexandros III, Talhan

Born in Damascus in 1869, where he was educated in the Greek Orthodox School. His brilliance and his steadiness led to his being sent to the Ecclesiastical College in Constantinople. In 1894 he returned to Damascus and two years later went to the religious academy in Kiev. Studied for a few years in Moscow. In 1903 he was appointed Bishop of Adana and Tarsus, but was badly received by the population there and resigned in 1906. In 1908 he was appointed Bishop of Tripoli and remained there until 1930, when he was elected Patriarch of Damascus by the Damascus electors but not by other members of the electoral college, who elected Arsanios, Bishop of Latakia. A schism resulted and the three other patriarchs (Alexandria, Constantinople and Jerusalem) sent representatives to conduct an enquiry into the election. They finally gave their opinion in favour of Alexandros. The schism, however, persisted until the death of Arsanios in 1932. Alexandros has been criticised for his weak handling of the Epiphanos revolt in 1935, which resulted in the formation of an independent church in Latakia in 1936. This independent community existed until 1939, when the French High Commissioner threatened to declare it illegal. Since that date Epiphanos and the Patriarch have been reconciled. The Italian attack on Greece in 1940 brought Alexandros into the open as an outspoken supporter of the Greek cause in spite of the presence in Syria of an Italian Armistice Commission and in spite of the pro-Axis leanings of the French Vichy authorities. As he supported the Greeks, so he supported the Allied cause under the same circumstances. The traditional Russian support enjoyed by the Orthodox Church in Syria having ceased in 1917, the Orthodox community under Alexandros has drawn nearer to the Moslem Syrian Government and, on the whole further away from the Latin Christian community which enjoyed the protection of the French Mandatory. Alexandros maintains relations with the Anglican Church both in Jerusalem and in England. When the Government of the U.S.S.R. acknowledged the Russian Orthodox Church in 1941-42 he began a correspondence with the Patriarch Sergei, and attended the election ceremonies in Moscow of the Patriarch in January 1945. In 1950 was given honorary membership of the Theological Faculty at Kiev by the Metropolitan of Leningrad. Alexandros seemed at one stage very susceptible to Soviet blandishments but he has displeased Moscow by accepting an invitation to

attend the St. Paul 19th Centenary celebrations at Athens. Still retains considerable intellectual vigour. Opportunist and anxious to get what he can out of both the East and the West.

#### 8. Antaki, Naim

Born Aleppo 1900. Educated in American University, Beirut. Greek Orthodox. A lawyer, he formerly worked with Maitre Louis Zaidé and was at one time Dean of the Order of Barristers at Aleppo. Has visited India. Secretary to the Syrian delegation in Paris for the conclusion of the Franco-Syrian Treaty. On his return he became, in July 1937, Director for Foreign Affairs, but resigned in December 1937, being dissatisfied with the way in which he was ignored by his Moslem colleagues whenever important decisions were to be taken. Took no part in politics from fall of Nationalist Government (1939) until selected as Minister for Provisional Government of Ata Bey Ayoubi, in which he held Ministries for Foreign Affairs and Public Works (March 1943-August 1943). Elected Deputy for Damascus, whither he had officially transferred his domicile, in 1943, but for many months took no active part in politics as a result of temporary loss of eyesight through overwork. Minister of Finance, April 1945 to August, in Fares Khouri's second Government (q.v.); member of Syrian delegation to United Nations Conference in San Francisco, April 1945. Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Public Works in Saadullah Jabri's Government (q.v.), September 1945, but resigned December 1945. Minister for Foreign Affairs in Jamil Mardam's First Government, December 1946 until April 1947.

Is lawyer of Middle East Pipe Lines and of the Banque de Syrie. Was lawyer of Tapline but was not employed during the Zaim régime because he was said to get on badly with Husni Zaim (q.v.) whom he defended unsuccessfully when he was court-martialled in 1941. Successfully helped Middle East Pipe Lines to secure their way leave and refinery conventions in June 1949. Has been member of Syrian delegation at several United Nations Conferences and at many Arab League meetings. Attended Inter-Parliamentary Union Congress in Stockholm in September 1949 and in 1950 as a Syrian delegate. Formerly an ardent Nationalist, his views are now considerably more moderate although he retains his great admiration and friendship for Jamil Mardam. Very well educated, a tremendous worker and straightforward and sincere. Well disposed towards the British. Speaks excellent English and French.

#### 9. Aphram I, Mar Ignatius

Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Patriarch of Antioch. Born 1884. Educated by the Dominicans at Mosul and received into the Roman Catholic Communion. Subsequently reverted to his original Church and was ordained in it. Became Patriarch with residence at Homs 1932. His community extends over the Middle East and India (whence he draws considerable funds). Very aware of his own importance and that of his Church. Like most Levant churchmen, mingles politics with religion.

#### 10. Armanazi, Najib

Born about 1900. From Hama. Docteur en Droit ("à titre d'étranger") of Paris. Was private secretary to President Abed, and so anathema to Taj ed Din, who persuaded de Martel to oblige Abed to get rid of him. Appointed private secretary to President Atassi in 1937. On the resignation of President Atassi (July 1939) remained unemployed until appointed Secretary-General to President Quwatly, August 1943. Is brother-in-law of Jamil Mardam. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to

Great Britain, Poland and Czechoslovakia, January 1945. Syrian representative on Preliminary Committee for United Nations Organisation and member of Syrian delegation to United Nations Organisation meeting in London, November 1945; appointed Minister to Sweden September 1947. He is not generally considered to have made a success of his mission in London and was recalled in June 1949. Appointed Syrian Minister to India in March 1950.

#### 11. Arslan, Adil Amir

Born about 1890. A Druse from the Lebanon (brother of Shekib Arslan, *q.v.*). Was pro-Turk in the War of 1914-18 and held a Kaimakamship in the Lebanon. Member of the Party of Independence 1919-20. Took an active part in the rebellion of 1925-26 and was condemned to death by the French. Amnestied in 1937. Expelled from Egypt in 1931 after anti-Italian agitations. Lived for some years in Iraq. Accompanied Syrian Prime Minister to Paris in 1937 to discuss ratification of Franco-Syrian Treaty, and subsequently returned to Syria, where he received a warm welcome. Has several times visited the United Kingdom, where he has business interests and where he was connected with Arab centre. Figured on the Palestine Black List (1937 and 1939). Worked with von Hentig and Roser from beginning of year 1941 to arrival of Allas in Syria, June 1941, when he fled to Turkey, where he is believed to have maintained contact with Syria. Is stated to have tried to put Druses against the Allies. In October 1941 became head of "Free Syrian Government" created by Vichy. Returned to Syria after the intervention of the President of the Republic in 1945 with the Allied Security authorities; appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Brazil January 1946 but did not proceed. Minister of Education in Saadullah Jabri's third Government June 1946. Minister of Education in Jamil Mardam's first Government December 1946 to October 1947. Member of Syrian Delegation to London Palestine Conference in autumn of 1946 and to United Nations Palestine discussions September 1947. Deputy for Jaulan 1947.

Member of Syrian delegation to United Nations Assembly in Paris in 1948. Was invited by Husni Zaim to form a Government in March 1949 following *coup d'Etat* but did not succeed. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister on 17th April, 1949, in Colonel Zaim's first Government, but disagreed with Zaim's readiness to talk with the Israelis, resigned on 25th June, 1949. Nominated Minister to Angora in July 1949 but has not yet left. After death of Zaim published in a Beirut paper a series of revelations about his former master.

Is a distinguished-looking and widely travelled person but retains many of the characteristics of his Druse ancestry—unreliability, cunning and outbursts of bad temper. Appointed Syrian Minister to Turkey in October 1949. He is also accredited to Greece.

#### 12. Assal, Sabri

Born Damascus 1901. Sunni Moslem. Took law degree in University of Damascus.

Being of Nationalist outlook, joined Nationalist Youth Movement and became its leader in 1940. Active in formation and control of Iron Shirts Movement until 1937, when it was disbanded. Joined up with Shukri Quwatli's *Islah* Party and became his principal lieutenant in 1940. Under Vichy régime was anti-Allied, and organised in May 1941 Committee for Defence of Iraq (*i.e.*, pro-Rashid Ali). Arrested by Allies in February 1941 and interned at Rashaya. Released March 1943, elected Deputy for Damascus that year. Was a leading member of the League of National Action, which exercised

considerable influence in Damascus and on which the President of the Republic placed considerable reliance.

Minister of Interior in Fares Khouri's second Government (*q.v.*) April to August 1945. Minister of Justice in Fares Khouri's third Government, August-September 1945. Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Education in Saadullah Jabri's second Government, September 1945 to April 1946. Minister of Interior and Minister of Health in Saadullah Jabri's third Government, April-December 1946. As Minister of Interior showed himself ready to take strong action to prevent disorders and to suppress anti-Government activity. Elected deputy for Damascus in 1947. Secretary-General of the National Party. Pretended to co-operate with the late Husni Zaim in 1949 but in reality worked against him. Lay low towards the end of Zaim's régime but after Zaim's fall came out into the open again as an active worker for the National Party. He is unmarried, and drinks and gambles heavily.

#### 13. Assioun, Fathalla

Born 1899. Educated at the Frères School and the French School of Law, Aleppo. A well-known Aleppine lawyer of the Armenian Catholic Community. A moderate member of the National *blouq* and a supporter of Saadullah Jabri. Deputy for Aleppo in 1936 and again in 1943. On the resignation of Naim Antaki (*q.v.*) from Saadullah Bey's second Government was appointed Minister of Public Works, January until April 1946. Minister for Public Works again in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949. A somewhat colourless individual with a reputation for probity and high principles.

Resigned from National Party in September 1949. Elected to Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as member of the Popular Party. Appointed Minister of Health in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950.

#### 14. Atassi, Adnan

Born Homs about 1905. Sunni Moslem. Son of Hashem Atassi (*q.v.*). Lawyer. During Nationalist Government was appointed Syrian Vice-Consul and attached for instruction to French Consulate, Istanbul. Married a Turkish lady. Elected Deputy for Homs 1943 and again 1947, and President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Syrian Chamber. Minister Plenipotentiary to France and Belgium, January 1945 to March 1946. Minister of Justice and Public Works in Jamil Mardam's First Government, December 1946 to June 1947. Represented Syrian Chamber of Deputies at the International Parliamentary Conference at Geneva, September 1945. At one time suspected of pro-Axis activities and was known to be in frequent contact with the Grand Mufti during the latter's residence at Versailles. A prominent member of the Parliamentary Constitutional Party. Intelligent and well educated and was one of the leading Deputies in opposition to Shukri Quwatli's régime. Sent as Minister to Paris in 1949 and headed Syrian Delegation to Lausanne talks with Israel under auspices of Palestine Conciliation Commission in the same year.

#### 15. Atassi, Faidi

Born about 1905. Son of former Mufti of Homs and cousin of Hashem al Atassi (*q.v.*). Educated in France (law). Had no political career, but was Chief of Municipality of Homs. Became Minister of Education in the Hassam al Hakim Government on its formation in September 1941, but resigned early in March 1942 in pique. Chosen to be Minister of Justice, Education, Social Affairs in Provisional Government at Ala Bey Ayoubi (March 1943-August 1943). Weak character and very boastful,

being over proud of his education. Returned to his job as Head of the Municipality, Homs, until 1946, when he resigned. Deputy for Homs, 1947.

Invited by Husni Zaim to form a Government following *coup d'Etat* of March 1949 but refused to take office as Minister of Education when his attempts failed. Accepted post of Minister of National Economy in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as a member of the Popular Party. Minister of Justice in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned in May 1950. Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies 1950-51.

#### 16. Atassi, Hashim

Born about 1865. Good landed family. Prime Minister and President of the Constituent Assembly under Feisal, and President of the Constituent Assembly of 1928. Went to Mecca to be one of the three mediators in conflict between Imam Yahya and Ibn Saud. Succeeded Hanano as leader of the Syrian Nationalist *blouq* in January 1936. Led the Syrian delegation that went to Paris in March 1936 to negotiate a Franco-Syrian treaty after the disturbances of January-March 1936. A Nationalist who tempered courage with discretion. With the Syrian delegation in Paris his moderating and soothing influence was of great assistance to the successful conclusion of the treaty negotiations. Elected President of the Syrian Republic 21st December, 1936. On his election as President he resigned the leadership of the Nationalist Party, which was taken over by Shukri Quwatli. As President showed the same dignified tact and restraining influence as he had done during the treaty negotiations. His influence over the Nationalist Party grew less, however, as the Nationalist Government took the bit more firmly between its teeth. Resigned with the fall of the Nationalist Government on 7th July, 1939, and retired to his property at Homs, where he had built himself a pleasant villa during his tenure of office. Had conversations with General Dentz about resuming office in March 1941 and with General Catroux in September 1941 and again in March 1943, but on each occasion without result. Did not participate in 1943 elections and did not stand for the presidency. He began to be regarded as a respectable old man of moderate opinions, but somewhat *passé*. During the Cabinet crisis of December 1948 was invited but failed to form a Government. After the *coup d'Etat* by the late Colonel Hinnawi of 14th August, 1949, formed a provisional coalition Cabinet. A figure-head rather than a leader. Elected temporary Head of State by the Constituent Assembly in December 1949, pending the drawing up of a new Constitution. Elected President of the Republic on 5th September, 1950, the day when the new Constitution was formally adopted and the Constituent Assembly became the Chamber of Deputies.

#### 17. Atrash, Hassan Amir

Born about 1908. Head of the House of Acre, the leading house of the Atrash family. Was Mohafiz of Jebel Druse until he was appointed Minister of Defence in Husni Barazi's Government (April 1942 to January 1943), taking the place occupied by his uncle, Abdul Ghaffar Pasha, until the old man's death in March 1942. Was again Minister of Defence in Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943). Deputy for Soueida 1943 and President of Defence Committee of Syrian Chamber, but placed on reserve in December 1947. Re-appointed Mohafiz of Jebel Druse (April 1943) and resigned from the Chamber. The full integration of Jebel Druse in the Syrian Republic in 1945 was largely due to his influence. In May 1945 he

sponsored the mutiny of the Groupement Druse against their French officers and *n.c.o.s.*, to whom he gave sanctuary in his house. He considers that the Syrian Government are not sufficiently appreciative of the "leading rôle" the Druse have played both in 1925 and 1945 against the French. Amir Hassan is a typical Druse. He is ill-educated, stubborn, ambitious and avaricious. Despite his pretence of being pro-British, he did nothing to help the Allies during the Syrian campaign; and nothing to hinder. He can, however, sometimes be "jollied" into favourable action. Flirted with the Nationalists, with the French and with King Abdullah. His following in the Jebel Druse was split by Shukri Quwatli in 1948 and his control is no longer absolute.

#### 18. Atrash, Soltan Bin Hamud Pasha

Born about 1875. (Soltan is a name, not a title.) Family originally from Rashaya, migrated to Jebel Druse in 1860's and became paramount Druse family there. Soltan is the head of the Kraiye house, which is junior to the Acre house, headed by Emir Hassan (*q.v.*). Under the Turks, Soltan adopted wary tactics and avoided a conflict. In 1925-26 took a leading part in the Druse revolt and became a centre round which the various insurgent leaders moved. When the revolt was crushed Soltan Pasha fled to Transjordan with his closest adviser, the Christian Oqla Qutami. There he found sanctuary, although condemned to death in absence by French court-martial. In 1937 returned to the Jebel but took no active part in politics, leaving Emir Hassan to dominate the Jebel. He retired to Kraiye, content to live on his past glory, which remains considerable. During the campaign of 1941 took no part. In March 1942, after the death of Abdul Ghaffar Pasha el Atrash, at that time Minister of National Defence, was offered the Ministry of Defence, but refused it. Soltan Pasha and Oqla Qutami were awarded pensions for life by the Syrian Government as patriots and heroes of 1925-26 revolt. Ill-educated, of small intelligence and with a reputation for meanness, he is crafty, and managed to inspire in the insurgents of 1925 confidence in his leadership. He remains the most important Druse. Is inclined to be pro-British and was anti-French. He feels, however, that the British let him down, as they told him not to intrigue against the Fighting French (and he abstained from doing so), but allowed the French to intrigue against him, undermining his influence in the Jebel Druse.

During the past few years he has on several occasions openly showed his dissatisfaction with the Damascus Government on the grounds that insufficient deference is paid to him and his past record.

#### 19. Ayesh, Muhammad

Born about 1895. Sunni Moslem. Prominent landowner and merchant of Deir ez Zor. No political career and was formerly well-disposed towards the French. Good reputation in his district for honesty. Became Minister of National Economy in Hassam al Hakim's Government (September 1941 to April 1942), and again in Husni Barazi's Government (April 1942 to January 1943); again in Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943), when he showed goodwill in negotiations concerning the British-Syrian Petroleum Company. Elected Deputy for Deir ez Zor 1943, and in 1947 and Vice-President of Chamber. Consistently supported Shukri Quwatli's manoeuvres for re-election as President. Was Minister of Agriculture in Khaled el Azm's Government of December 1948.

An amiable landowner with some shrewdness but not much brain and no education.

**20. Azm, Abdurrahman**

Born 1916 at Hama. Son of a wealthy landowner. Educated at the American University of Beirut he is a graduate of the Jesuit School of Law, Beirut. Related to the family of Khalid al Azm. Elected to Parliament in 1947 and to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, as an Independent. Appointed Minister of Finance in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Serious-minded, intelligent and a hard worker. A bitter enemy of Akram Hourani. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Re-appointed Minister of Finance in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951.

**21. Azm, Khalid**

Born about 1900. Son of Mohamed Pasha al Azm. Did not at first take an active part in politics, except an occasional intervention in agricultural matters. Member of the Municipal Council. Managing director of the National Cement Factory. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice in the Bukhari Cabinet, March to May 1939.

Under the influence of the Italian Disarmament Commission, was appointed by Vichy French (General Dentz) on 2nd April, 1941, as "Chef d'Etat" and Minister of Interior. His régime lasted until September 1941, when it was replaced by "Independent" Syrian Government with Shaikh Taj ed Din as President. During Syrian campaign he collaborated closely with Vichy French to preserve order in Damascus. During whole period of office he showed himself to be under the influence of the Nationalists—especially of Shukri Quwatli. Deputy for Damascus 1943 and Minister of Finance in Saadullah Jabri's Government (August 1943–October 1944). Minister of Finance and Ravitaillement in Fares Khouri's first Government October 1944 to April 1945. Minister of Finance and Defence in Fares Khouri's third Government August to September 1945. Minister of National Economy and Justice in Saadullah Jabri's third Government, April 1946. Was acting Prime Minister on several occasions and resigned in December 1946. Appointed Minister to France, Belgium and Switzerland, May 1947. Syrian representative on Franco-Levant States financial negotiations December to February 1946–47.

Was recalled to Syria by Shukri Quwatli in November 1948 to help solve the Cabinet crisis which followed the resignation of Jamil Mardam and took office as Prime Minister. Under his Government, which lasted till March 1949, a forward economic policy was pursued. He was arrested by Husni Zaim but quickly released. After the second *coup d'Etat* of August 1949, in which Zaim was executed, he became Minister of Finance.

A rich landowner, very pompous, conceited and overbearing. A bit of a bully, but like all bullies, if stood up to, caves in. He is intelligent, well-educated, and more widely read and has wider interests than most of his compatriots. Can be very obstinate and stuffy, however. Has ambitions to become President of the Republic, but might be handicapped in this by his present wife, who was formerly a cabaret dancer. Suspected at one time of pro-German sympathies, but probably incorrectly; he has shown himself ready to co-operate with the Western Powers, particularly the French. Became Prime Minister in December 1949, shortly after the "disciplinary action" taken by Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shihakly against Sami Hinnawi and Asad Tallas. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. After considerable difficulty managed to form a Cabinet of Independents on 27th March, 1951 which succeeded that of Nazim Qudsi (*q.v.*).

**22. Azmeh, Adil**

Born about 1882. A diplomé of the Turkish School of Law. Whilst a political refugee in Transjordan he formed with his brother, Nabih al Azmeh (*q.v.*), the "Istiqlal Party," whose first objective was the expulsion of the French from Syria. During the 1925–26 revolt in Syria he collected, as treasurer of his party, large sums of money from Palestine, Transjordan and other countries. After keeping more than half himself, he provided the rebels in Syria with money and arms on a considerable scale. His flagrant abuse of British political asylum earned him a contemptuous condemnation by French court-martial. He was included in the general amnesty of 1937. On his return he was acclaimed as a great patriot and given high office in the Ministry of the Interior by Nationalists in return for forming "Istiqlal Party." Back in Syria he used his influence to repay the consideration he had received from the British authorities in Transjordan and Palestine by facilitating the supply of arms and ammunition to the rebels in Palestine during the disturbances of 1936 and in 1937 in going a step further in employing the Syrian Government machinery, from his key position in the Ministry of the Interior, to assist the recruitment of bandits in Syria for thuggery in Palestine. On the fall of the Nationalist Government in the spring of 1939 he proceeded on leave to Iraq, where he built a cinema with his ill-gotten gains. In his absence (April 1940) he was condemned to twenty years' imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the Council of Directors (July 1939). In collaboration with Haj Amin Hussaini is believed to have had a part in the Iraq rising (May 1941) and fled to Turkey, from where he returned clandestinely early in 1946. Mohafez of Alaouite Mohafazat June 1946 to January 1948, when he was transferred as Mohafez to Aleppo. Appointed Minister of Interior in Khaled al Azm's Cabinet of December 1948 and resigned the following March. He announced his withdrawal from politics early in 1949 but took office as Minister of State in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949.

A leading member of the National Party. An unscrupulous political adventurer. Suspected of working for union with Iraq, he and his brother Nabih (*q.v.*) have been lying very low, mostly in Beirut, since Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shihakly's appearance on the Syrian political scene in December 1949.

**23. Azmeh, Nabih**

Born about 1888. Brother of Adil al Azmeh (*q.v.*). Graduated from Turkish Military Academy in 1900. His advance in Turkish army was slow, as he was only a lieutenant when the war broke out in 1914. Was taken prisoner by British forces in 1916, but obtained his release to join the Amir Faisal's followers, where, like the Duke of Plaza Toro, he led from the rear. When Faisal was placed in charge of the "Occupied Enemy Territory East" he was made Chief of Police, Aleppo, but fled Syria on the French occupation in 1920. He was made welcome by the Emir Abdullah as a political refugee. He and his brother formed the "Istiqlal Party" in Transjordan. This led to his banishment, and he went to the Hedjaz, then to Egypt and so to Palestine, where he continued to foment trouble in Syria. He was one of the first of the Syrians amnestied in the general amnesty of 1937 to return to Damascus. In August and September 1937, under the direction of the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al Hussaini, and in concert with the Palestinian, Muin al Madi, he organised the anti-British pan-Arab Congress of Bludan. In an astonishingly short time he considerably enriched himself from the subscriptions obtained by the "Palestine Defence Committee," of which he was prominent member. In December 1938 used his influence to try to create trouble for the French, and

was implicated in a plot against the "security of State," for which he was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment and twenty years' banishment. Amnestied November 1940 at instigation of Italian Armistice Commission. Renewed his interest in politics (especially with Shukri Quwatli) and in May 1941 became member of a committee to send recruits and money to Iraq, against British. Fled to Turkey during Syrian campaign from where he returned clandestinely early in 1946 claiming President Quwatli's protection. He immediately made his house a centre for Palestinian politics and began an attempt to rejuvenate the "Istiqlal Party" of which the President of the Republic was a leading member. He was twice proposed for Cabinet appointments but after representations by His Majesty's Legation the suggestions were dropped. In April 1946 was appointed Minister of Defence in Saadullah Jabri's third Government when His Majesty's Minister was again consulted but raised no objection. Resigned June 1946 after a series of disagreements with his colleagues. Mohafez of Damascus town October 1946 to January 1947. Chairman of National Party December 1947 and now pretends to have altered his anti-British views. Announced his resignation from politics in early 1949 and began to intrigue with Iraq.

A thoroughly contemptible rascal, who has betrayed his friends one after another. Like his brother Adil (*q.v.*) has been lying low since Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shihakly's appearance on the Syrian political scene in December 1949.

**24. Babil, Nassuh**

Born Damascus about 1905, of obscure parentage. Arrested with Ajlani (*q.v.*) in 1938 for his support of Shabbandar against Mardam. Remained supporter of Dr. Shahbandar until latter was assassinated in July 1940, when he and Fuad Qodmani became leaders of Shahbandar Party. He and his party failed in 1943 elections and the party disintegrated. He is proprietor of the important Damascus newspaper *El Ayam* and President of the Press Syndicate. Came under suspicion of the Syrian Government of being in touch with the French regarding the setting up of a quisling Government during the bombardment of Damascus in May 1945. Visited the United Kingdom in December 1946.

A mediocre individual who, however, has the respect of a large section of the Syrian press.

**25. Biddash, Khalid**

Born about 1910 in Damascus, of Kurdish origin of a family named Kutrash, Sunni Moslem. Educated in Damascus, where he studied philosophy. Became secretary of Communist Party in Damascus, 1928. The Communist Party was persecuted by the French and in 1934, following the distribution of Communist leaflets, was suppressed, Biddash being condemned to several years' imprisonment. He escaped to Russia, where he attended the Oriental School of Propaganda. He now claims that, while in Russia, he met Stalin. In 1936 went to Paris and obtained a special amnesty through the Syrian delegation which was negotiating the Franco-Syrian Treaty. Returned to Syria in January 1937 and resumed leadership of the Communist Party. Again went into hiding in Damascus at the outbreak of war when Communist Party was suppressed, remaining there until Germany attacked Russia (June 1941). After attempts to reach an understanding with Shukri Quwatli (*q.v.*) by which he should be included on the latter's electoral list in 1943, Biddash stood as an independent candidate and failed. He failed also in the 1947 elections. For the last five years he has devoted his energies to organising the activities of the Communist Party, and is known to be in constant touch with members of the Soviet Legation.

Stated to be owner of Communist paper *Sant ush Shaab*, of Beirut. Popular among the working classes and a good speaker. Said to receive substantial subsidies from Russia. Speaks Arabic, Kurdish, Russian, French. Ambitious, and prepared to make trouble. Tried to stand as an Independent candidate for the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, but his application was refused. Married a school teacher early in 1951. A strong, capable leader who remains as dangerous and elusive as ever.

**26. Bakri, Assad**

Born 1903. Son of Fuad Pasha el Bakri. Licencié en Droit of the Sorbonne. Has visited Britain and America. From 1929–37 president of the Syrian Land Registry. Became Secretary-General of Damascus Municipality and in 1940 Governor of Damascus district. In the same year he took over the Department of Posts and Telegraphs but was unable to work with the French while their sympathies were divided between Vichy and de Gaulle, and resigned his office.

His two sons received an English education at Victoria College, Alexandria. Assad shares the admiration of the Bakri family for the Hashemites and the British. Since 1940 he has lived as a gentleman-farmer in Zebdani near Damascus. He is energetic, intelligent and thoughtful.

**27. Barazi, Husni**

Born about 1882. Son of Suleiman Agha Barazi, a rich landed Kurdish family of Hama. Minister of the Interior under Damad, 1926. Deported on suspicion of assisting rebels in July 1926. Member of Constituent Assembly, 1928. Opposed by Nationalists in elections of 1932 and was not elected. He was, however, appointed Minister of Education in Taj ed Din's Government in March 1934, and resigned with Shaikh Taj in February 1936. Appointed Mohafiz of Alexandretta in January 1937, he sought to prove his attachment to his new Nationalist masters by intriguing with the Arab parties in the Sanjak against the Turks and the Mandatory, but was ejected in November 1937. Appointed Mohafiz of Damascus in March 1942. On fall of Hassan el Hakim Government (April 1942) was appointed by Shaikh Taj ed Din President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of the Interior. Succeeded Faiz Khouri as President of the Commission Supérieure of the Wheat Office, in which capacity he promised to secure large quantities of wheat, but did not succeed. Quarrelled with Shaikh Taj ed Din, posing as Syrian patriot, thinking he had the support of his colleagues. Matters came to a head in January 1943, when all his colleagues resigned and he was obliged to retire.

During the Cabinet crisis of November 1948 endeavoured to return to politics as a virtual dictator. Was appointed by Husni Zaim for a short time in 1949 to be Mohafez of Aleppo and Deputy Military Governor of Syria and ran his district autocratically but well. Resigned owing to rivalry with Ziam, whom he thought of challenging for the presidency. Was later imprisoned by Ziam for a short time and might have been executed had Ziam not preceded him.

A man of some strength of character, but devoid of morals and intelligence. Intriguer and accused in the past of trafficking in hashish. Until he assumed office was heavily in debt. Before the visit to Syria of the Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry on Palestine in 1946 he volunteered to His Majesty's Consul, Damascus, to testify before the Commission in favour of the Jews. Professes to be well-disposed towards Britain. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as an Independent. A bitter enemy of Akram Hourani (*q.v.*).

Fundamentally unreliable, he has since the end of 1949 posed as the bitter opponent of the Army's interference in Syrian politics but this has not prevented him from remaining on good terms with the military clique.

### 28. Barmada, Mustafa Hilmi

Born in Aleppo 1883. Son of Sa'iq Barmada. Educated first in Aleppo and later studied law in Turkey. Began his professional career as a teacher in Aleppo. Later taught law in Beirut. Was appointed Public Prosecutor in Aleppo then member of the Damascus High Court of Appeal and later its President. Became Governor of Aleppo in 1921. In 1922 resumed presidency of High Court of Appeal. Elected to Syrian Parliament in 1947. Led the Syrian Liberal Party for a time but relinquished his leadership when it was expanded and became the Syrian Popular Party under Rushdi Kekhia (*q.v.*) in 1948.

### 29. Barmada, Rashad

Age about 43. Moslem. Member of a leading Aleppo family. Deputy in 1947 but failed in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in 1949. A prominent lawyer and now President of the Aleppo Lawyers' Syndicate. One of the original members of the Popular Party. Minister of Interior in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

### 30. Barudi, Fakhr

Born, Damascus, 1893. Aide-de-camp to King Feisal in Damascus. First became prominent in revolt of 1925, in which he took an active part. Elected Nationalist Deputy in 1932 and again in 1936. In 1936 he was Inspector-General of Iron Shirts, a Nazi-inspired youth formation. Exiled for a short period by French for his share in 1936 troubles. Fled to Transjordan in 1939 after discovery of "plot against security of State" and kept a low coffee-house in Amman until he returned to Damascus in May 1941 after formation of Khalid el Azm Government. Elected Deputy at a by-election in Damascus (October 1943). Deputy for Douma 1947 and "Controller" of the Chamber. Appointed head of the Military Information Service in 1948 for a short time.

Was bitterly anti-French. Poses as an ardent Nationalist, but is a bit of a buffoon and a farceur; consequently nobody really takes him seriously. As head of the National Arab Bureau in 1938-39 actively aided Palestine rebels in propaganda sphere. A noted Arab orator in low-style Arabic, and a heavy drinker. Commonly accused of unnatural vice.

### 31. Bitar, Salahuddin

Born 1912. Unmarried. Graduated in law at the Sorbonne, Paris. On his return to Syria in 1935 he worked for seven years as a teacher. During that time he acted as lieutenant to Michel Aflaq (*q.v.*) in building up the Ba'ath el Arabi Party, of which he is still secretary-general. Once called himself a Communist but now claims to have disavowed Marxism on the grounds that it is too materialistic.

### 32. Buzo, Ali

Born 1916. A Kurdish lawyer and long-standing member of the People's party. Landowner. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 thanks to the support he received from the Moslem Brotherhood. Appointed Minister of Agriculture in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

### 33. Daham al Hadi, Shaikh

Born 1895. Bedouin chief and head of the Shammar Khrossa. Disputes the leadership of all the Shammar of Syria with his cousin, Meizar Abdul Muhsen, who actually heads the Shammar confederation. Also claims hereditary leadership of the Iraqi Shammar, from which he was evicted by the British. He is therefore bitterly jealous of Sheikh Sfook and continually contrives to undermine his position. Appointed Deputy of the Jezirah tribes in 1936. Exiled in 1942 for obstructing road constructions and wheat purchase. In spite of his being in exile, was elected Deputy in 1943 for Jezirah tribes and in 1947; returned to Syria 1944.

A proud and truculent sheikh, ignorant of his limitations and of world conditions. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Said to be sympathetic to Popular Party.

### 34. Dandashi, Ali Abdul Karim

Born 1905 at Tel Kalakh. Member of the Danatch clan. A Sunni Moslem. Studied at the Islamic College in Beirut till 1928. Joined the scout movement in 1923 and has remained associated with it. In 1937 he took a group of Syrian scouts to the jamboree in Holland, travelling by way of the Balkans, Austria and Germany, returning through France and Italy. On this occasion he stayed for some time in Berlin and Potsdam, where he associated with Syrians in Germany, notably one of the Dalati brothers, who are associated with him in the scout movement. From 1937 has devoted most of his time to scouting and was elected Chief Scout in November 1941. Is associated with the League of National Action, which was founded by his cousin and of which his colleague in the scout movement, Dr. Rushdi Jabi (*q.v.*), is leading member. His arrest was ordered by the French in February 1942, but the order was cancelled at the end of March, and, shortly after, he paraded at the head of the scouts at the review of the Syrian gendarmerie.

Dandashi played an important part in the dispute between the scout movement and the Ministry of Youth and Propaganda under Munir Ajlani (*q.v.*), opposing Government control of the scout movement. After the Allied occupation showed himself willing to co-operate and took part with his scouts in passive defence exercises. Energetic and a disciplinarian. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, as a member of the Popular Party.

### 35. Dawalibi, Ma'rif

Born 1907 in Aleppo. Lawyer. A graduate of the Syrian University, he also holds a Paris University Doctorate of Law. From 1936 to 1938 he was a member of the National Party and was active in both Aleppo and Damascus. During the war was in France at the time of the German occupation and was in close touch with the ex-Mufti Haj Amin Hussaini, Rushid Ali al Keilani and the other pro-German Arabs. Collaborated with the Vichy Government. Helped the ex-Mufti to escape from France in 1946. Elected to Parliament in 1947, he left the National Party and joined the Popular Party in 1948. Member of the Moslem Brotherhood. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Appointed Minister of National Economy in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th December, 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950.

While in Cairo in April, 1950, made a statement indicating that the Arabs would prefer to become a Soviet Republic rather than be Judaized as a result of American pressure. This statement caused something of a sensation and was the signal for a noisy demand in Syria, chiefly by the Moslem Brotherhood, for a rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Although the statement did him harm in responsible

Syrian circles it boosted his popularity among the masses. He must still be considered an influential personality thanks to his personal relations with Rushdi Kekhia (*q.v.*).

### 36. Fansa, Nazir

Born in Aleppo 1918 of humble parentage. Educated in the lower classes of Aleppo Secondary School. Worked with his father as a tradesman until 1935. He then took up journalism and accepted hack jobs at low wages on various newspapers. He was considered by his employers to be too venal and ill-educated to be given a position of trust. His work in the press brought him into touch with Wahbe Hariri (*q.v.*) who began to employ him on confidential tasks and arranged a marriage for him into the Baqi family. Fansa's sister-in-law by this marriage later became the wife of Husni Zaim (*q.v.*). Hariri purchased a Damascus newspaper *Alif Ba* in 1948 and appointed Fansa editor-in-chief. Before the Zaim *coup d'Etat* Fansa was becoming a person of some importance in the Syrian press.

On 31st March he became private secretary to Husni Zaim and remained in that position until the second *coup d'Etat* when he was arrested. He took a prominent part in Syrian foreign affairs. He arranged a meeting between Zaim and King Farouk in April 1949, visited King Ibn Saud and the President of the French Republic, and whipped up anti-Hashemite feeling in the local press. Imprisoned when Zaim's régime was overthrown in August 1949.

He is extremely venal. He amassed a large personal fortune between March and August 1949. He is ignorant, pompous and trusts no one. Tried before a special military court but found "not guilty" and released early in 1950.

### 37. Farra, Jamal

Born 1911. Moslem. Obtained a diploma for electrical engineering in France. In 1940 became an Inspector of the Ministry of Education and in 1945 Director of Secondary Schools. Appointed Acting Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education in 1947 and Secretary-General in 1948. In that year he was also a member of the Syrian National Commission for U.N.E.S.C.O. In June 1949 was appointed Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels and in October 1950 Acting Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Has an ingratiating manner which at first tends to conceal an obvious lack of sincerity. Fundamentally he dislikes all foreigners. A climber, who will support anyone whom he thinks will help him in the upward path in Syrian affairs.

### 38. Fa'ur, Fa'ur Amir

Born about 1900. Chief of the El Fadl Bedouin (sedentary) near Lake Hula. The lands of his tribe are astride the Syria-Palestine frontier. Sold his lands in Palestine to Jews. Elected Deputy for Kuneitra, December 1936. Strongly suspected of being engaged in smuggling arms and men to Palestine during the disturbances of 1937 to 1939. Was useful to British during and before Syrian campaign (June 1941). Went on pilgrimage to Mecca, winter, 1941-42, and, on return, spread pro-Allied propaganda at instance of Ibn Saud. In May 1942 toured Syria with Jamil Shamal, securing the signatures of ex-Deputies to a declaration in favour of the President of the Republic, Sheikh Taj ed Din. Deputy for Kuneitra 1943 and again in 1947. Subsequently joined the supporters of a monarchist régime for Syria under King Abdullah and maintains close contact with Amman. Visited America at the time of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco and spent a month in London on his way back. Took part in various minor skirmishes with Jewish

settlements in the Hula area during the early part of 1948. Some of his tribe have gone over to the Israelis.

A weak and spendthrift individual who has not maintained the renown of his family established by his father. Always playing at politics but with no conviction. Has the ambition to become a Minister. An agreeable but ineffective personality.

### 39. Ghazzi, Said

Born about 1895. Took law degree in Damascus in 1921. Deputy to the Constituent Assembly 1928, but lost his popularity with the Nationalists by supporting Sheikh Taj ed Din. Pressed for Nationalist participation in 1932 elections. When negotiations with High Commissioner's delegate came to a deadlock (Ihsan Sherif insisting on standing), Said al Ghazzi withdrew his own candidature. Reputation enhanced by not being a party to the subsequent unsuccessful deals with M. Ponsot. Withdrew a second time in favour of Afif el Solh in July by-elections. Included in Ata Bey al Ayoubi's Cabinet as Minister of Justice in March 1936. Refused the post of Mohafiz of Latakia in January 1937. Appointed Director-General of the Ministry of National Economy 1938 and Director-General of Posts and Telegraphy in 1938, but dismissed in 1939. Included on Shukri Quwatli's list for 1943 election, he polled nearly as many votes as Quwatli himself. Re-elected Deputy 1947. In fact, it is almost certain that he polled more votes but the matter was "arranged." Minister of Justice and Ravitaillement in Fares Khouri's second Government, April to August 1945. Minister of Finance in Jamil Mardam's first Government, December 1946 to October 1947, and was on several occasions acting Prime Minister. Minister of National Economy in Mardam's second Government, October 1947. Good-natured, intelligent, comfortably off. Too colourless to be either useful or dangerous. Of moderate Nationalist tendencies, but dissatisfied with treatment received from that party and has kept out of politics recently.

### 40. Haffar, Lutfi

Born Damascus 1888 of a family of well-established merchants. Minister of Public Works under the Damad, 1926, and deported for Nationalist sympathies some months later. Member of the Constituent Assembly, 1928. Accepted post as administrator of Ain Fijeh waterworks, 1931. Deputy in 1932 and again in 1936 when he was elected vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies. Minister of Finance in the second Jamil Mardam Cabinet (July 1937 to February 1939). Prime Minister, 23rd February to 14th March, 1939. Implicated in the murder of Dr. Shabandar in July 1940, and fled to Bagdad. Returned to Syria after the charge against him had been dropped and the Government of Directors replaced by the moderate Nationalist Government of Khalid Bey el Azm (*q.v.*) in April 1941. Deputy for Damascus 1943 and again in 1947 and Minister of Interior in Saadullah Jabri's Government (August 1943-October 1944), but resented the latter's interference in his Department. Minister of Interior in Fares Khouri's third Government, August-September 1945. Minister of Interior in Saadullah Jabri's second Government, September 1945 to April 1946. Although practically illiterate is interested in the newspaper *Al Inshaa*, which is nominally owned and directed by his cousin, Wajih el Haffar.

Not an extreme Nationalist, but has a lengthy record of political activity in connexion with Palestine—assisted Nebih el Azmi to organise the Arab Conference at Bludan in 1935 and was appointed chairman of the Syrian Committee for the Defence of Palestine. Not a strong personality

though he was an important member of the Nationalist bloc and has been president of the Damascus branch of the National Party since 1948. A good second fiddler. Suffers from heart trouble.

#### 41. Hajjo, Agha Hasser

Born about 1898 near Mardine, Turkey. Head of Haverkan tribe of Kurds which moved into Syria about 1922. No specific education, but reads and writes Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish. With his late father took prominent part in Separatist Movement in the Jezirah. Resides at Hassetché. Was pro-Ally and co-operative during the war; elected Deputy for Kamishli 1943 and in 1947, but does not enjoy the confidence of the National Party owing to his former connexion with the French.

#### 42. Hakim, Hassan

Born Damascus about 1886. Was an Inspector of Finance and later Director of Posts and Telegraphs in Faisal's Syrian Government of 1918-20. He was held responsible for delay in sending off Faisal's reply to General Gouraud's ultimatum in July 1920. (It was the absence of a reply that provided the excuse for General Gouraud to order French troops to advance on Damascus.) Exiled by the French but had fled to Egypt and later went to Iraq. Then he obtained an appointment as manager of the Arab Bank's Jaffa branch. Amnestied in 1937, he returned to Damascus and, as a loyal Nationalist, was appointed Director-General of Wakf. Minister of Education in Bukhari Cabinet, March to May 1939. Later became Director of Government Agricultural Bank. In September 1941 became President of Council and Minister of Finance in "Independent" Syria under the presidency of Sheikh Taj ed Din, as proclaimed by French. Quarrelled with President over latter's financial requests and with French over non-granting of various concessions of form to independence. Because of his rather stubborn and limited capacity was on bad terms with his colleagues, whom he was unable to pull together. Was undoubtedly pro-British, but was very indiscreet in falling under the influence of unworthy counsellors. He gave his enemies a chance to attack him because he openly proclaimed himself as opposed to the feudal landlords and because, although materially honest, he provoked laws to benefit himself in small ways. In April 1942 he was forced to resign in rather an unpleasant manner, after defying the President, and reverted to former employment as Director of the National (Syrian) Agricultural Bank until July 1944, when he retired. Subsequently criticised the actions of the President of the Republic and the Government in letters and memoranda and was outspokenly in favour of a Hashimite monarchy in Syria. Applied to visit London at the same time as the Emir Abdullah early in 1946, but was not granted a visa as his visit did not come under any category admissible at the time and it was not considered desirable to make any exception. Failed in 1947 elections. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November, 1949. Appointed Minister of State in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned in October. A close friend of Munir Ajlani (q.v.). Has openly advocated that Syria should join the Western camp against Russia.

#### 43. Hakim, Hikmet

Born 1890. Obtained M.D. at Istanbul College, served in the Turkish army during the First World War and settled in Idlib, where he practised. Deputy for Idlib 1926, 1936, 1943 and 1947. Minister of Public Works in Fares Khoury's second Government, April to August 1945, and again in Khoury's third Government, August to September 1945. Minister of National Economy in Jamil

Mardam's first Government, December 1946 to October 1947, and Director-General of Mira. Elected second Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies, October 1947. Appointed Minister of National Economy in 1948. Used to be a member of the National bloc, but has not joined the National Party. He is not very impressive and has usually held office because he has few enemies. He is respected for his honesty and succeeded in making a number of reforms to clean up the Ministries of which he was in charge.

#### 44. Halabi, Fuad

Born Damascus about 1905. Sunni Moslem. Married to an Atassi of Homs: formerly civil judge in Damascus and Homs. Appointed Acting Mohafiz of Homs 1942, confirmed in October and maintained in office by Saadullah Jabri's Government. Reputed honest as judge, and showed himself an astute and capable administrator. After his definite appointment as Mohafiz, however, he displayed political ambitions and showed himself reluctant to take a strong line when notables were concerned. Appointed early in 1946 as Administrative Inspector at Ministry of Interior. From December 1946 Director of Tribal Affairs but was sacked in 1949.

#### 45. Hamzeh, Arii

Born about 1903. Educated in Damascus. Studied law in the Damascus School of Law. Member of the Court of Appeal, having been appointed to this post in year 1936. Head of the Damascus Municipality in April 1942 until early 1945, when he was appointed Government representative on the Council of State. From June 1947-48 Secretary-General of Prime Minister's office (he is a brother-in-law of Jamil Mardam). Organised Damascus Spitfire Fund. Member of a well-known Damascus family claiming descent from the Prophet Mohamed. Given King's Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom in 1947. Popular, pleasant, well-mannered and well educated, but rather weak. Well disposed towards Britain.

His term of office as Government representative on the Council of State ended when the latter was replaced by the Supreme Court under the new Constitution of September 1950 and he is now at a loose end though, as a supporter of Jamil Mardam, still interested in politics.

#### 46. Hariri, Moharrad Khair

Born about 1900. The most influential sheikh in the Hauran. Considered a large landowner. After the entry of the Allies into Syria he was one of the principal agitators for the co-ordination of the Hauran with Transjordan. During the summer of 1942 he was a leading figure in the move for a Haurani Mohafiz. His name headed the telegram of protestation sent to General Collet on 20th August, 1942, complaining of Husni Barazi's high-handed method for the collection of wheat. This telegram demanded Barazi's resignation under threat of non-co-operation with the O.C.P. Frequently travels to Damascus, where he has dealings with political personages. Deputy for Ezrau, Hauran, 1943, and again in 1947.

Literate, but not educated. Politically conscious, ambitious and willing to run with the hares. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

#### 47. Hariri, Wahbi

Born in Aleppo in 1907, received a secondary school education. Until 1939 was a small contractor and businessman in Aleppo, with connexions in Turkey. During the war he very rapidly increased his fortune contracting for the French and British armies, and building what is now the largest textile

factory in Syria. Gave the price of a Spitfire to the British in 1942. Elected Deputy in 1943 on Saadullah Jabri's list and in 1947 on the list of the Parliamentary Popular Party. Appointed Minister of Finance in Jamil Mardam's Government in October 1947, is on good terms with Jamil. He is a clever businessman with few scruples, but has no knowledge of Government finance or of currency matters. He drinks heavily, and is disposed to talk frankly with the British with whom he believes his commercial interests lie.

Alleged to be a strong early supporter of Colonel Zaim after the *coup d'Etat*: his newspaper *Alij Ba* was consistently pro-Zaim. His financial dealings during the Zaim period are now under investigation by a special committee, and his property has been sequestered. He himself has vanished.

#### 48. Hatim, Anwar

Born 1910. An Alepine Christian educated in France, graduate of law from Paris University. Teacher of French Literature at the Tajhiz School, Damascus, 1933-36. Secretary to Prime Minister 1937-39. Assistant Chief of Diwan at Prime Minister's Office 1939-42. Director of Propaganda and Social Affairs April 1942-April 1943. Chief of Service in Prime Minister's Office April 1943-May 1945. Director of Prime Minister's Office May 1945. Appointed Second Counsellor at Ministry for Foreign Affairs March 1946 in addition to his other post. August 1947 sent on mission to London and was guest of British Council for a month. Intelligent and has accurate idea of the inefficiency of the Syrian Government. A supporter of Jamil Mardam and a friend of Munir Ajlani, he has frequently shown himself willing to provide information to His Majesty's Legation. Now combines the posts of secretary-general of the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and director of the Prime Minister's Office.

#### 49. Hayyani, Taufiq

Sunni Moslem. Born about 1895. From Aleppo. Kaimakam of Douma in 1925 and Governor of Hauran, 1930. Secretary to the Syrian Government after the dismissal of Sheikh Taj ed Din (1932). Acting Governor of Damascus during the elections of April 1932. President of the Municipality of Damascus, 1936, and Mohafiz of Damascus. Dismissed March 1942 and shelved in Council of State whence he was recalled to become Director-General of the Interior on the dismissal of Bahij al Khatib (q.v.) October 1943. Having quarrelled with his Minister (Lutfi Haffar) was appointed Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs August 1944. A pleasant person and has shown himself to be co-operative particularly in putting through contracts for British firms for telecommunication material. Standard telephones contract for example. Has represented Syria on several occasions at Arab League Communications Committee. Placed on pension at the end of 1950. Appointed chairman of the Lattakia Port Board in April 1951.

#### 50. Hiffel, Abbud, Shaikh

Born about 1914. Son of Sheikh Jedaan al Hiffel, the weak and stingy Sheikh of the Agaidat. Sheikh Abbud was elected Deputy for Meyadine in 1943 and again in 1947. Speaks Arabic only but is intelligent and has the personality to command the respect of his followers. As he is still young and untried he is apt to resort to force to assert himself, but is not by nature turbulent. His popularity is on the increase amongst the Agaidat. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

#### 51. Hindieh, Grégoire

Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Aleppo. Born 1895. Educated in the Armenian Seminary in

Rome. Member of a wealthy Aleppo family with political connexions. A brother was at one time Minister of Finance. Formerly known as a Franco-phile; after his brother's resignation from the Finance Ministry he became a vehement critic of the French Administration in Syria, and later became just as critical of the Syrian Nationalist Administration.

A prelate whose interests are more temporal than spiritual and who is not much trusted locally.

#### 52. Hiraiki, Hikmet

Born about 1895. Prominent Moslem landowner of Maaret-en-Noman (Aleppo region). No political career, but always friendly to the French. Is a farmer and on very good terms with the Bedouins of his district and with his own tenants. Became Minister of Ravitaillement in the Hassan al Hakim Government (September 1941 to April 1942), again in Husni Barazi's Government (April 1942 to January 1943) and again in Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943). Was also appointed Assistant to Jamil Ulshi as President of the Wheat Commission. Deputy 1943 for Maaret-en-Noman and again in 1947. Shrewd. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

Enemy of Akram Hourani (q.v.).

#### 53. Honsi, Edmond

Born 1901. Son of Albert Homsy, educated A.U.B. Switzerland and England, private banker with interests in Egypt, who did lucrative business with Turks during the 1914 war. Was Syrian Minister of Finance (March to October 1936). Member of Syrian delegation for the conclusion of the Franco-Syrian Treaty in 1936. Elected Nationalist Deputy for Aleppo, December 1936. Took unofficial charge of the British Consulate at Aleppo during 1941 evacuation and has always been outspoken in his British sympathies. Was made honorary Commander of the British Empire. April 1946 appointed Minister of Finance in Saadullah Jabri's third Government when he instituted investigation into irregularities in Finance Ministry. Failed in 1947 elections on President's list. Was appointed Syrian Minister to London in June 1949 by Husni Zaim and continues to hold that post. Is intelligent and pleasant, if somewhat indolent. Also accredited to Belgium.

#### 54. Hourani, Akram

Born Hama about 1915. Sunni Moslem. Lawyer. Extremist leader of Youth Party of Hama. Joined Iraqi revolution 1941 at head of a small number of young men; met German commission in Homs and Aleppo. Deputy 1943, and Secretary of Chamber of Deputies. Intelligent and has considerable influence over young men, including sons of notables, in spite of his anti-feudal views. Was engaged in active agitation against the Feudal Party (Ghaleb Azm, Abdul Qader Kailani (q.v.)) and escaped arrest together with Raif Milqi (q.v.) only by intervention of the Prime Minister (February 1944). A leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and a most active critic of the Government. Proprietor and chief editor of *El Yaqa* first published May 1946—which from the first issue has adopted a violently anti-British attitude, and is notable even amongst Syrian newspapers for the inaccuracy of its news. Re-elected Deputy for Hama 1947. Member of Parliamentary Constitutional Party 1948. Actually fought for six weeks with volunteers in Palestine early 1948, and urged severe measures in Government. An intimate counsellor of Zaim in the early days of the *coup d'Etat* of March 1949 and is said to have been responsible for many of the reforms which were then initiated. Broke with Zaim and after the latter's death became Minister of Agriculture in Hashem Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949 in which he was



the most dynamic member. A man with considerable drive but vain and irresponsible. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Headed the group in the Assembly which strongly opposes Syro-Iraqi union and found powerful support among Army officers, notably Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakly (q.v.) with whom he threw in his lot. Appointed Minister of Defence in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. In January 1950, formed his own radical-socialist party the "Arab Socialist Party." Resigned from the Cabinet in April 1950. Married early in 1951. He is rarely if ever seen in public; knows no foreign languages. An intimate friend of Lieut.-Colonel Shishakly. Ambitious and ruthless he is out to make a bid for political power and is busy endeavouring to canvass support throughout the country for his party.

##### 55. Huraiki, Ignatios

Born about 1900. Greek Orthodox Bishop of Hama. As usual with Levant ecclesiastics, more interested in politics than church matters and tries to get his finger in every pie. Supporter of Nationalist bloc, was elected vice-president of the Committee for the Defence of Palestine at the Arab Conference in Bludan 1937. At meeting at Aleppo (21st November, 1942) to commemorate Hanano, Nationalist hero, made a speech to the effect that there were no minorities. This roused uproar in the Christian and French circles. A speaker of repute, in July 1947 was sent by the Patriarch to Brazil, where he addressed ex-patriate Syrians.

Clever and unscrupulous.

##### 56. Ibish, Nuri

Born about 1895. Educated at A.U.B. and Cirencester Agricultural College. Appointed by Saadullah Jabri's Government to be Director-General of Tribal Affairs (March 1944) on the cession of the Tribal Department by the French to the Syrians. Resigned November 1946. Elected Deputy for Damascus 1947, receiving highest number of votes cast, which made him aspire to the Presidency. Has spent a great deal of money on the improvement of his farm near Damascus. Was co-opted Minister of Agriculture in Husni Zaim's two Cabinets and worked hard to reform his Ministry. Well disposed towards Britain.

##### 57. Inglizi, Issam

Born 1913. Educated American University of Beirut and Law College, Damascus. A friend of Sabri el Assali (q.v.), in whose office he was from 1937 to 1939. Practised as a lawyer from 1940 to 1944, when he was appointed head of a Department at the Presidency. Was known to be a sympathiser with the League of National Action and is thought to have been mixed up in the Shahbandar murder. Visited London, November 1945, as one of the secretaries to the Syrian delegation to the preliminary meeting of the United Nations Organisation Conference and returned favourably impressed with British intentions. Member of Syrian delegation on United Nations Enquiry Committee to Greece and Balkan States, January 1947. Adviser to Syrian delegation to United Nations Assembly, September 1947. Acting Secretary-General of Presidency, February 1948. Member of Syrian Delegation to United Nations Assembly in Paris in 1948. Was arrested and subsequently released by Husni Zaim in April 1949. Speaks excellent English. A somewhat overfed and gross man, and while on the surface easy to get on with, he is probably not too reliable; he is, however, certainly loyal to Shukri Quwatly. Is now practising law.

##### 58. Ishaq, Said

Born 1897. Syrian Orthodox Christian. Elected Christian Deputy for the Jezirah in 1937, despite the opposition of the Syrian Nationalists. Deputy for Kamishli 1943. Controller of the Chamber of Deputies 1943-44, though formerly one of the leaders of the Separatist movement in Jezireh, now supports Syrian unity. Failed 1947 elections. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

##### 59. Jabi, Rushdi

Born Damascus 1902. Sunni Moslem. Doctor of medicine of American University of Beirut 1926. Doctor to Damascus Municipality 1936. Is more interested in social and political activities than in medicine. Since early 1920's has been associated with Ali Dandashi (q.v.), in Syrian Scout movement. Member of League of National Action (1936) and on good terms with Nationalist bloc, who made use of Jabi's scouts for political demonstrations and propaganda. Implicated in plot against the security of the State and Bahj al Khatib (July 1939) and fled the country to Transjordan, where he established a clinic in Amman. In his absence was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment and twenty years' banishment, and only returned to Syria in 1941, when charges against him had been dropped. In 1942 appointed president of Higher Scouting Committee and participated in movement to oppose affiliation of Scouts with Syrian Ministry of Youth and helped Rashid Ali to make his journey to Saudi Arabia 1945. Eventually came to terms and was nominated head of Higher Scout Committee. His brother Jamil (now defunct), also a member of the League of National Action (a Germanophile), fled the country on the Allied occupation. After the failure of his private practice in Damascus Dr. Rushdi secured the appointment of Director of Health in Latakia (April 1944). Sent to England, September 1946, on a medical mission. Appointed Director of Health in Aleppo early in 1948.

Appointed Secretary-General of Ministry of Health in May 1949. He was not a good organiser, however, and wanted everything to pass through his hands with the result that there was often delay and confusion in the Ministry. Replaced in October 1950 during Nazim Qudsi's term of office by Dr. Munir Sadat (q.v.).

##### 60. Jabri, Ihsan

Born Aleppo about 1885. Brother of the late Saadullah al Jabri. Deputy for Aleppo in the Parliament at Constantinople during the Turkish régime and for a time aide-de-camp to the Sultan. Returned to Aleppo after the war and proceeded to Damascus, where he was Chamberlain to King Faisal during the latter's short reign. Fled with King Faisal at the time of the French occupation of Damascus, first to Palestine and then to Iraq. In 1924 he was delegated by the Syrian Arabs to go to Geneva to uphold the cause of Syrian independence at the League of Nations in company with the Druse leader, the Emir Shakib Arslan. Sentenced by the French to permanent banishment from Syria and remained in Europe working for Syrian independence from 1924 to 1937. Amnestied in April 1937 and was Mohafiz of Latakia in November 1937 to April 1939. Was actively associated with bread strikes in Aleppo, March 1941. Arrested by the British in Aleppo in September 1942 as potentially dangerous, but released in September 1943. Failed in 1947 elections; president of the Aleppo branch of National Party 1948. An enthusiastic Nationalist of influence who still has personal ambitions.

##### 61. Jabri, Majduddin

Born in 1910, son of Kemal Bey Jabri and nephew of Saadullah Bey Jabri; married to Hale, daughter of Ihsan Bey Jabri (brother of Saadullah Bey). Educated at Aleppo and for five years at Robert College, Istanbul. Spent three years, 1932 to 1935, in United States (B.A., Illinois University) where he studied engineering. Served for six years in the Public Works Department of the Palestine Government and seconded for service in Transjordan (1937-43). Secretary-General of Aleppo Municipality 1944-45 and President of the Municipality since July 1946. Took office as Minister of Public Works in Khaled el Azm's non-party Government of December 1948. Although invited by Husni Zaim to act as public works adviser he refused and was apparently against the régime. Also refused the post of Minister of Public Works in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949. Well educated, practical, moderate and less susceptible to party and family influences than most Arabs. Devotes his spare time to exploiting his father's many estates. Speaks excellent English and good French; the main hope for the future of the Jabri family. Withdrew to Beirut at the end of 1949 and has apparently given up any idea of returning to Syrian politics. Much influenced by his wife.

##### 62. Jabbara, Hassan

Alawite. Born about 1897 at Alexandretta, where he was educated in the French Collège des Frères. Worked in the Deutsche Palestina Bank and on the Bagdad Railway before the 1914 war. After the armistice of 1918 he supported the French, and in 1942 was appointed Director of the Finance Department in the Sanjak of Alexandretta. Went to Geneva in 1937 to assist the League of Nations experts in drawing up the statute of the sanjak. Supported the Alawite element in the sanjak, which he has done much to organise. Expelled from Alexandretta in August 1938 and appointed Director of Finance at Aleppo later in that year. Appointed Director-General of Finance by Khaled el Azm in April 1941 and combined this with the directorate of Supply for one year. Inspector of Trade Disputes, 1943; Minister of Ravitaillement in Fares Khouri's second Government April to August 1945. Minister of Ravitaillement in Fares Khouri's third Government August to October 1945. Minister of National Economy and acting Minister of Ravitaillement and Government Representative MIRA in Saadullah Jabri's second Government October 1945 to April 1946; acting Minister of Finance from December 1945. Reverted to Director-General of Finance and appointed Government representative on Supreme Council of Common Interests May 1946. Syrian representative (April 1947) on International Trade Organisation. Syrian delegate to Havana Conference on trade and employment November 1947. Appointed Secretary-General of Ministry of Finance March 1948. On several occasions represented Syria on Arab League Financial Committee. Being born in the Hatay, he bitterly resents its cession to Turkey, especially as the Turks confiscated his property there. Until outbreak of war was *persona non grata* to Turks. Was Minister of Finance in Khaled el Azm's Government of December 1948 and again in Husni Zaim's Government of April 1949. In this capacity was co-operative in obtaining signature and ratification of the Middle East Pipe Line conventions.

An able financier and believed to be honest, though he has been accused in the press of being party to financial irregularities in the Ministry of Finance. A timorous personality, although of stubborn character. Not liked on account of his coldness. Appointed Director-General of Syrian Customs in March 1950, after the dissolution of the

Customs Union between Syria and the Lebanon. Minister of Finance in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi in June 1950. Was omitted from the Cabinet when the latter was reformed by Nazim Qudsi in September 1950.

##### 63. Jandali, Farhan

Born 1910 in Homs. Moslem. Took a degree in medicine at Berlin University. Deputy for Homs in 1947 and elected member of the Constituent Assembly in 1949. Member of the Popular Party. Minister of Education and Health in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Appointed Minister of National Economy when Nazim Qudsi reformed his Cabinet in September 1950. An upright, pleasant little man but rather ineffective. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

##### 64. Juaid, Muhammad

Born about 1885. Alawite. Chief of the Rasha-winah section of the Kalbiah tribe living at Sahnab in the Masiaf district. Is very popular with his tribe. Owner of extensive properties on which he has recently redeemed the mortgage. Is paid by the Syrian Tobacco Monopoly to suppress tobacco smuggling, but is believed, nevertheless, to help smugglers. On bad terms with Suleiman Murshed (q.v.), jealous of the Abbas and Kinj families. Deputy for Masiaf in Syrian Parliament, 1937. Middle aged, calm and reasonable, kept on good terms with the Administration and the French as he considered this to be in the interest of his tribe. For this reason the other leaders in Alawite area and in Syria regard him as spineless. Elected Deputy for Masiaf 1943, and again in 1947.

##### 65. Kabbara, Sami

Born Damascus 1904. Sunni Moslem. Doctor of law of Montpellier and Geneva. Diplômé of the "Institut des Hautes Etudes de Droit International." Chief Clerk to the Speaker of the Syrian Parliament 1932-33. Owner and editor of newspaper *Al Nidal*.

As a personal friend of the late Dr. Shahbandar, is opposed to the Nationalists. Although he failed to be elected in 1943, he secured the most votes of any non-Nationalist candidate. Led the poll in 1947, but rarely attended the Chamber because he got little support for his advocacy of a broad-based Government. Acted as adviser to Zaim in the early days of the *coup d'Etat* but quickly thought better of it and resisted Zaim's repeated approaches. Became Minister of Justice and Health in August 1949 in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet.

A well educated man and noted for his integrity, but vain, ambitious and an opportunist. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Minister of Interior in Khalid al Azm's Cabinet of December 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Fell seriously ill early in 1950 and is still in poor health. Minister of Interior in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951. Has not fully recovered from a serious heart attack early in 1950 and is moody and excitable. Appears more and more to be out for his own position and power.

##### 66. Kahlali, Nuruddin

Born 1908 in Homs. Moslem. Educated at Robert College, Istanbul, where he obtained his B.Sc. in electrical engineering; later went to Illinois College, United States and graduated in Civil Engineering. On his return to Syria in 1929 he worked for two years as engineer with the Damascus Tramway and Electricity Company, and from 1931-34 was employed in a similar capacity with the Cement Company in Damascus.

He started his career as a Civil Servant in 1935 when he entered the Public Works Department as engineer for the Damascus Municipality, a position which he held until 1941. He was then appointed Chief of the Irrigation Department, and promoted to be Director of Irrigation in 1944. During that year he represented Syria at the International Air Conference at Chicago, and also accompanied the Syrian Delegation to the United Nations Organisation Conference in San Francisco in 1945.

He was Secretary of the Syrian Engineers' Association when it was founded in 1942. In 1947 he was appointed Director-General of the Ministry of Public Works and Communications, and in 1948 was promoted to Secretary-General of the Ministry, the post which he still holds.

Nuruddin Kahhali, who is regarded as the most qualified engineer in the Government service, is a hard worker and in the past year or two has had to devote a good deal of time as technical adviser to the Government in connexion with the various economic development schemes under consideration. The Yarmouk Hydro Electric Scheme—now about to be executed—is his own idea, a report on which he first submitted to the Government for consideration in April 1949.

Kahhali speaks fluent English, and reasonably good French.

#### 67. Kailani, Akram

Born 1905. Speaks English and a little French. His family own village of Beit Sawa in the Damascus Ghouta. Helped Shukri Qawatli in 1943 elections on whose list he hoped to appear for election, but he did not do so; became dissatisfied with the present régime. Suspected of having helped Raschid Ali to go to Saudi Arabia. In 1946 was actively touring Syria contacting notables throughout the country on behalf of King Abdullah and reporting somewhat over optimistically on the successes attending his efforts. Since then he has been running a Greater Syria bureau in the Lebanon, and has kept in constant touch with supporters in the Levant States and with King Abdullah. He is a petty intriguer with little personality. Lay low, mostly in Beirut, during Zaim's régime. Late in 1949 approached His Majesty's Legation in the hope of obtaining their blessing for a plan to bring about the Greater Syria project by armed revolt inside Syria. Suspected with his brother Saadi (*q.v.*) of being implicated in the murder of the Qadhi of Damascus early in 1950.

#### 68. Kailani, Saadi (Shami Pir)

Born about 1904 in Damascus. Brother of Akram Kailani (*q.v.*). Made no secret of his admiration for the Germans, and after the British occupation of Syria in 1941 reappeared in Waziristan where he is known to have stirred up tribesmen to join in a rebellion against the Afghan Government. Was found in the British Zone of Germany in the autumn of 1945; representations were made by the Foreign Office to the War Office that all possible steps should be taken to prevent him returning to Syria. The India Office took the same view as regards India. He returned to Damascus, however, in July 1946 in a French ship. Failed in 1947 elections. As a result of high gambling and election expenses his finances are shaky. A cruel and ruthless person of considerable ability, who would probably be ready to support any régime from which he could expect to benefit. Lay low, mostly in Beirut, during Zaim's régime. Suspected with his brother Akram (*q.v.*) of being implicated in the murder of the Qadhi of Damascus early in 1950. Has a German wife.

#### 69. Kallas, Bahij

Born in 1907 at Hama. Christian. Graduated from Hama College in 1925 and in 1926 entered the

Military Academy. Became 2nd lieutenant in 1929, 1st lieutenant in 1933, captain in 1941, major in 1947, lieutenant-colonel in April 1949. In 1947 he acted as military assistant to the Syrian Commander-in-chief. On 1st March, 1949, a month before Zaim's *coup d'état*, he became Assistant Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander-in-chief. In this capacity he played an important part in the overthrow of the Kuwaiti Government. For some weeks he seemed to be one of Zaim's closest advisers. Later he fell out of favour. He was a member of the "Higher War Council" which arranged the overthrow and execution of Zaim in August 1949. Inspector-General of the Army in 1950.

A capable staff officer who was perhaps somewhat unbalanced through overwork. Moody, occasionally friendly and not trusted except by his fellow Christian officers. Speaks French and Arabic. Arrested in September 1950 along with Munir Ajlani (*q.v.*) on charges of conspiring against the security of the State with the Jordan Government. After trial by a military tribunal was acquitted in January 1951. Subsequently placed on pension.

#### 70. Kayyali, Abdurrahman

Born 1890. Educated in the American University of Beirut. Married into the Mudarres family. King Faisal's Chamberlain at Damascus. Prominent Nationalist but inclined to preach moderation. Elected Nationalist Deputy for Aleppo in 1936. Minister of Education and of Justice in the former Nationalist Government. Went to Geneva in December 1936, to put forward the Arab claim for Alexandretta. Sent from Damascus to Aleppo in February 1937 to apologise to the French for the Iron Shirt clash with the French Gendarmerie. Minister of Education and Justice in the second Jamil Mardam Cabinet (July 1937 to February 1939). Minister of National Economy in the Lutfi Haffar Cabinet (February to March 1939). His moderate party was swamped in July 1943 elections by Saadullah Jabri, but he was eventually elected himself and was Minister for Justice in Saadullah Jabri's first Government August 1943 to October 1944. Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Works in Fares Khouri's first Government October 1944 to April 1945. Became a leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and lost no opportunity of attacking succeeding Governments in the Chamber of Deputies. Failed in 1947 elections. Member of Syrian Delegation to United Nations General Assembly in Paris, 1948. President of the National Party since 1949. His influence is probably less than might be expected. Intelligent, but not masterful.

#### 71. Kekhla, Rushdi

Born 1905. Belongs to a well-known middle-class Aleppo Moslem family. Studied law at Damascus University. Elected Deputy for Aleppo, December 1936, he became known for his vehement speeches in the Syrian Assembly. Resigned from the National bloc, March 1939. Deputy for Aleppo in 1943 in opposition to both the Jabri and Kayyali groups, and remained opposed to them in Parliament; re-elected in 1947 on list of Parliamentary Constitutional Party. A man of some character and seriousness of purpose but not much brain; is known and admired as a man sincerely devoted to constitutional practices, which he carried with him into the Popular Party whose leader he became in August 1948. His opposition to the Mardam and Khaled el Azm Cabinets in 1948 and his obstinate refusal to associate himself with the Zaim régime made him extremely popular. After the overthrow of Zaim he accepted the post of Minister of the Interior in Hashim Atassi's predominantly Popular Party Cabinet. In November 1949 elected to the

Constituent Assembly, of which he was President. A strong protagonist of the idea of Syro-Iraqi union.

President of the Chamber of Deputies from September 1950 until March 1951 when he resigned following the fall of Nazim Qudsi's Government.

#### 72. Khatib, Bahij

Born about 1893 in the Lebanon and educated at the American College, Beirut. Appointed a Government clerk in Faisal's Administration (1919-20) and went to Palestine on the occupation of Syria by the French. He returned in 1923 and obtained a minor Government post. During the revolt of 1925-26 Bahij Bey served in the Ministry of the Interior and earned the reputation of being a pro-French official. He afterwards served under Sheikh Taj ed Din in 1928 and as private secretary to Haqqi Bey al Azm in 1932, thus incurring the displeasure of the Nationalist Party. He was then sent as Mohafiz to Deir ez Zor until 1934, when Sheikh Taj ed Din, once more Prime Minister, appointed him Administrative Inspector in the Ministry of the Interior. He also filled the posts of head of the municipality and Director-General of Police. In 1937 the Nationalist Party, who had come into power, dislodged him on account of his alleged pro-French sympathies. He was, however, retained in Government service on French insistence and did much to quieten down the situation in the Jebel Druse, where he went as administrator in November 1937. Did equally good work in the Jezirah in 1939. When Nationalist Government under Jamil Mardam was dissolved and the Constitution suspended, he became (9th July, 1939) President of the Council of Directors, a Government of civil servants. He administered Syria wisely and efficiently until April 1941, when the council was replaced by the Khaled al Azm Government. In June 1939 a group including Najib and Munir Rayess, and believed to have been hired by Nationalists, plotted to murder him, but the plot was discovered and culprits arrested. They were subsequently released at the orders, it is believed, of the Italian Disarmament Commission (November 1940). During the Khaled al Azm Government Bahij occupied his old post of Inspector-General of the Interior, but on formation of Sheikh Taj ed Din's Government (September 1941) he reluctantly (on French pressure) accepted appointment of Acting Minister of Interior. Had several disagreements with the French over their non-implementation of promise of independence and with the President over his interference with internal departmental affairs. When Cabinet was reformed after fall of Hassan al Hakim (18th April, 1942), Bahij again reverted to post of Inspector-General. Shortly after the accession to power of Nationalists in August 1943, was first relegated to post of Mohafiz of Damascus Province and later placed on retired list (October 1943). Withdrew to Lebanon and was told by the Government not to return to Damascus, as they feared him to be a French tool; alleged to have been included in the Quisling Government which was to have been set up after the events of May 1945. He is younger brother of Sheikh Fuad al Khatib, prominent figure of Arab revolt, and later councillor to the Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, a great Arab poet and Anglophil.

Speaks French and English fluently. Not above political intrigue, for which he is well placed, owing to his wide contacts. Returned to Syria during the Zaim régime. Has not taken an active part in politics since.

#### 73. Khatib, Muhammad Subhi

Born 1911. Studied in Syrian elementary schools. Showed an interest in social affairs from an early age. Began his career as a labourer in a textile factory. There he organised the first Syrian trade union in

1929. He devoted his leisure to study and the spread of the trade union movement. By 1936 he had created unions in several trades in Damascus. In 1937 he succeeded in winning official approval for a Syrian Labour Law. In 1946 he carried his work a stage further by securing the passage of a comprehensive and progressive Labour Law. He has succeeded in unifying the Trade Union Movement in Syria and is president of the General Council of Syrian Trade Unions. Since 1933 he has used journalism as an instrument in his struggle. His main contributions have appeared in the local magazines of which he has been editor at various times. Early in 1950 he began publishing a trade union newspaper called *Al Ummal*. Bitterly opposed to Communism and constantly attacked by the Communist underground press in Syria.

He is a man of high principle, intelligent, industrious and slightly self-effacing in company.

#### 74. Khatib, Zaki

Born in 1887. Moslem. Native of Damascus. Educated in Damascus and Constantinople, where he took degrees in law, political science and economy. Elected Deputy for Damascus in 1928, 1931 and 1947. Minister of Justice 1941-42. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1949 as an Independent. Vice-President of the Assembly. Minister of Justice in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Does not appear to have adhered to any particular party or movement for any length of time although he has been connected with many. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

#### 75. Khoja, Hamid

Born 1907 of a family of religious teachers. Educated at the Franciscan School at Aleppo and at the Teachers' Training College, Aleppo. Studied law in Paris, where he obtained his degree. Deputy for Raqqa 1932-36 and again 1943. Appointed Kaimakam 1937 first at Ziwiyeh and then at Jerablous. A leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party, he failed in the 1947 elections as the result of the intervention of the Syrian President in favour of his own candidate. His influence might prove important in the tribal area where he is the recognised political leader of a number of influential tribal sheiks. Has shown readiness to co-operate with the British and is an agreeable and cultivated individual. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Secretary of the Republican Liberal bloc formed by Abdul Baqi Nizamuddin (*q.v.*) early in 1950.

#### 76. Khouri, Faris

Born about 1875. Brother of Fuiz Khouri (*q.v.*). Educated at American College at Beirut. Protestant. Was a dragonman at British Consulate, Damascus, from 1899 to 1909. A member of the Turkish Parliament in 1913. Lawyer. Minister of Finance under Faisal, when he discreetly lined his pockets. Minister of Public Instruction under Damad, 1926. Deported some months later on suspicion of assisting rebels, thus winning martyr's crown of glory and confidence of Moslems. Well-off. Chairman of board of directors of National Cement Company; was professor of the School of Law, but resigned in 1941; legal adviser to the municipality until 1942, when he passed it to his son Suhail. Took leading part in the general strike of 1936. Went to Paris in March 1936 as member of the Nationalist delegation to negotiate a Franco-Syrian treaty. Deputy, December 1936. Elected President of the Chamber of Deputies (Speaker) on 21st December, 1936, in recognition of his services to the Nationalist bloc in the treaty negotiations. From fall of Nationalist Government in 1939, played no active part in politics

until 1943, when he was re-elected Deputy by a bare majority and again in 1947. President of the Chamber August 1943 to October 1944 and again October 1945 to October 1946. Prime Minister and Minister for Interior and for Education, October 1944 to April 1945. Member of Syrian Committee which signed Charter of Arab League, March 1945; Prime Minister April to August 1945. Head of Syrian Delegation to United Nations Organisation Conference at San Francisco April 1945. Prime Minister August to October 1945. Head of Syrian Delegation to United Nations Organisation Conference at London, November 1945, and to Round Table Conference on Palestine in London August 1946 and to United Nations General Assembly Session October 1947. Syrian Representative on Security Council December 1946-48. On his return to Syria enjoyed the position of revered elder statesman but has refused to accept any ministerial post. Although he gave Zaim's régime his blessing he criticised what he considered to be the unconstitutional nature of some of Zaim's acts. Is a prudent and skilful, if unscrupulous, politician, who is, despite his religion, on good terms with the Moslems and not with the Christians. Talks excellent English. A likable but obstinate old man; his age and heart trouble have made him incapable of withstanding the rough and tumble of Syrian politics. Represents Syria on the United Nations International Law Commission. Came out strongly against the clause in the draft Constitution (April 1950) making Islam the religion of the State. Replaced by Farid Zainuddin (*q.v.*) in June, 1951 as head of the Permanent Syrian Delegation to the United Nations.

#### 77. Khouri, Faiz

Born about 1891. Greek Orthodox. Educated by Irish Presbyterian Mission, at American College, Beirut, and at Law School, Istanbul. Originally Protestant, but converted to Orthodoxy in 1935 as latter community had representative in Chamber and Protestants had not. Elected to the Constituent Assembly, 1928, as mouthpiece for his brother Fares (*q.v.*). Noted Nationalist. Dean of the Faculty of Law at the Syrian University, Damascus, from year 1941 to 1943. Nationalist Deputy in 1932 with great following among university students. Played a leading part in the first session of Parliament and again during the general strike of 1936. Re-elected Deputy in December 1936. Head of the Damascus Bar, 1936 to 1940. Minister of Finance and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the fifteen day ministry of Lutfi Haffar, 1939. Minister for Foreign Affairs under Hassan al Hakim, September 1941 to April 1942, and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance in Husni Barazi Government (April 1942 to January 1943). Took strong line with the French over concessions of form to Syrian independence, but was unsuccessful. In agreement with Lebanese, struggled to obtain control of "Intérêts Communs." Framed budget for 1942 balanced (on paper) with proceeds from new taxes on income and agriculture. Was president of Commission supérieure to monopolise Syrian wheat, and displayed considerable energy and courage. Was attacked by landlords, &c., as being a Christian and corrupt, and forced to resign presidency of Wheat Office in July 1942. When Jemil Ulshi replaced Husni Barazi as Prime Minister (January 1943) Faiz Khouri gave up the Ministry of Finance, retaining only the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; one of the reasons for this being that it was felt that, as a Christian, he was not in a strong position to enforce taxation projects. He remained in office until the fall of the Ulshi Government, March 1943. His association with the non-parliamentary régime of 1941-43 brought him into disfavour with the

Nationalists, who refused to include him on their electoral list. He stood as an independent and failed, retiring to Beirut where he remained for a year. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Moscow April 1945; remaining there for a few months only he returned to Damascus and was appointed as Acting Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, October to December 1945. Placed on pension 1946. Appointed Syrian Minister to Washington, June 1947. Head of Syrian delegation to United Nations Assembly, September 1949 and 1950.

A man of moderate political opinions and considerable intelligence with undoubted ambition but has the reputation of being difficult to work with. Speaks good English and French. Despite his religion, is on good terms with Moslems.

#### 78. Lian, Mikhael Michel

Born Aleppo 1900. Greek Orthodox. Educated American University, Beirut. Professes an extreme form of nationalism. Was secretary at Aleppo of the Nationalist *bloc* before he was elected Deputy for Aleppo in July 1943. In August 1945 he organised a large number of Deputies to present a petition to the President of the Chamber asking for the resignation of Fares Khouri's second Government. August to November 1945 Minister for Foreign Affairs in Fares Khouri's third Government. April to December 1946 Minister of Public Works in Saadullah Jabri's third Government. Failed in the 1947 elections on the President's list, but became Minister of National Economy in Jamil Mardam's 1948 Government. Speaks some English and French and has shown himself anxious to be well regarded by the British. He is an assiduous political intriguer and enjoyed Saadullah Jabri's support but otherwise appears to be stupid and incompetent. Pretended to co-operate with Husni Zaim but secretly worked hard against him. Always fishing for British support for the National Party, but has recently kept in the background although he is intriguing all the time.

#### 79. Maizer ibn Abdul Muhsin al Jarba, Shaikh

Born 1907. Became head of the tribe of Shammar of Zor in 1907, when French recognised him instead of Mishaal al Fares. Distant cousin of Daham al Hadi (*q.v.*), who aspires to his place. Deputy 1936-39. In 1941 had contacts with German Armistice Commission in Beirut. Deputy in 1943 and 1947 for Badiat el Jezireh.

Of a peaceful disposition and weak in character. Was always led by French. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

#### 80. Maloyan, Hrant

Armenian Catholic. Born Istanbul 1895; graduate of Istanbul College; teacher Military College Istanbul 1915-16. Took part in 1914-18 war with 53rd Turkish Division at Ghaza. Chief of the Armenian Division in the French army at Beirut in 1918. As second lieutenant took part in occupation of Adana and Cilicia; promoted to rank of captain 1918; was appointed to Syrian Gendarmerie at Aleppo, Acre and Antioch 1921 to 1925, during Syrian revolution was transferred to Damascus 1925-26 in charge of Gendarmerie Transport Company; from 1935-37 was Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie Hama, Deir-uz-Zor and Euphrates. 1939-41 Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie, Damascus, Mohafazat. 1942-45 was promoted to rank of lieutenant-colonel and appointed Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie, First Legion. In August 1945 was promoted to rank of colonel and appointed acting Commandant-General of Gendarmerie. He took no part in the *coups d'Etat* of Zaim and Hinnawi although he could easily have cashed in. He was retired after the second *coup d'Etat* in August 1949. He speaks Arabic, English, French, Turkish, Greek, Italian and Armenian.

Extremely able and intelligent and it was largely due to his capability, that the Syrian Gendarmerie has been reorganised and has reached a reasonable standard of efficiency. Always ready to co-operate with the British but since the *coups d'Etat* of 1949 has become suspect because of his close connexion with them.

#### 81. Mardam, Haidar

Brother-in-law of Jamil Mardam Bey. Born Damascus, 1898. Graduated from Law School, Damascus, 1923. Married Damascus Christian and went to France to study law for several years. Secretary to municipality 1929-30. In 1936 Kaimakam at Ma'arat. January 1938 (Nationalist Government) "chef du protocole" in the Foreign Office and in March 1938 appointed Acting Mohafiz of Jezirah. In July 1939 Kaimakam of Idlib. In August 1941 appointed Mohafiz of Homs, where he remained until June 1942, when he was dismissed because he was suspected by Syrian Government of carrying information to French. In August 1942 he was appointed to the Foreign Office as "chef du protocole." Mohafiz of Hauran, April 1943 to March 1946, when he was transferred to the central office at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but refused to take up his post as it was graded lower in rank than that of Mohafiz. While Mohafiz of the Hauran he was suspected by the Government of being in suspiciously close touch with Amman, but was the first to "clean up" the French in 1945, when he seems to have shown energy, courage and ability to handle a fluid situation, and firmness tempered with justice towards a defeated enemy. Appointed Syrian Minister to Jedda in March 1947. Recalled in June 1949.

Mildly Nationalist in politics, pleasant and open-minded, but rather lacking in energy. Appointed Syrian Minister to Rome in June 1951.

#### 82. Mardam, Jamil

Born about 1890. Nationalist member of Constituent Assembly 1928. Deputy in 1932 and Minister of Finance. Was a member of the Nationalist delegation that went to Paris in March 1936 and became Prime Minister and Minister of National Economy December 1936 to July 1937. He formed new Cabinet July 1937, but his Government was attacked, notably by Dr. Shahbandar and Munir Ajlani, over the 1936 Franco-Syrian Treaty. Relations between Mardam and Shahbandar continued to deteriorate until the former was forced to resign. He and his Cabinet were openly accused by the press of great corruption and peculation. When Shahbandar was murdered in July 1940 Jamil Mardam was accused by the Shahbandarists of complicity and, with a few others, fled to Bagdad. Was in Bagdad at the beginning of the Rashid Ali revolt (May 1941), but is believed to have exerted moderating influence on rebels. Returned to Syria May 1941.

In January 1942 he went to Egypt, and, on his return, tried to provoke a political crisis by pretending that he enjoyed the confidence of the British, who had asked him to form a Government. He repeated this manoeuvre with greater insistence in June 1942. As a result, the Allies obliged him to live in the Lebanon and a communiqué was issued condemning his action. Elected Deputy in 1943 and in 1947 on Shukri Quwatli's list. Minister for Foreign Affairs and president of Cereals Commission in Saadullah Jabri's first Government, August 1943 to October 1944. Syrian representative on the Committee of Foreign Ministers of Arab Countries which met in Cairo in February 1945 to draw up Arab League Charter. Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Defence and Government representative to

42629

Supreme Mira Council in Fares Khouri's first Government, October 1944 to April 1945. Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Defence in Fares Khouri's second Government, April to August 1945; Acting Prime Minister during the Prime Minister's absence at U.N.O. Conference in San Francisco and was therefore head of the Government at the time of the events of May 1945. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Cairo, October 1945, and also to Saudi Arabia, October 1945, and presided at November 1945 session of Arab League, and on several other occasions has represented Syria at Arab League Meetings. Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Health December 1946 to February 1947. Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs April 1947. Appointed Military Governor Syria 15th May, 1948. Minister of Defence 23rd May, 1948. His Government was forced to resign in December 1948 by popular demonstrations. Has since lived outside Syria.

Foxy, *souple* and a trimmer. A man of great ambition and considerable ability, but not very scrupulous in money matters. Is probably the most likely of the leading members of the old National *bloc* to ally himself with a monarchical movement if he thought his interests lay that way.

#### 83. Midani, Abdul Qadir

Born 1913, studied at the French Engineering College for Bridges and Roads in Paris in 1931-32 and, after graduating from the Law College, Damascus, in 1935, practised as barrister. Was a prominent member of the League of National Action and was interned for a year at Rashiya in 1942 with other members of the League. Secretary of the Lawyers' Syndicate in 1934, Mohafiz of Jezireh, August 1945 to January 1948. He is an intelligent young man and appears to have taken a real interest in the work of administration of the Jezireh. He is a loyal supporter of Shukri Quwatli.

#### 84. Milqi, Raif

Born Hama about 1905 of humble family. Sunni Moslem. Lawyer. Extreme Nationalist and fomenter of riots. Very intelligent and had considerable influence over the masses, who supported his anti-feudal policy. Sincerely believes in his cause. Is prepared to use violence. Deputy for Hama 1943 but failed in 1947. Became a leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and joint editor of *Al Yaqa* with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*). Has a reputation in Parliament for demagogic oratory, which is usually of the most violent type directed against someone or something. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as an Independent. Vice-President of the Assembly. Fell out with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*) before the elections and joined the Coalition list of Husni Barazi. A bitter foe of Akram Hourani in Assembly debates. Appointed Minister of Education and Acting Minister of National Economy in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951.

#### 85. Mirzo, Ghabb

Born in 1892, started in Government service as a clerk in the Ministry of Justice, later became a magistrate, President of the Court of First Instance and member of the Court of Appeal. 1944-46 Mohafiz of Deir-uz-Zor. 1946-48 Director-General of Police. Mohafiz of Hauran, 1948-49. He is a Kurd and his enemies look down on him for his lack of education. He was, however, a friend of Shukri Quwatli, and he has showed himself ruthless in putting down disturbances or demonstrations hostile to the President. He is extremely deaf and speaks very poor Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish being his first languages.

**86. Mubarak, Muhammad**

Born 1912. Son of the late Abdul Qadir Mubarak (of Algerian origin), who was a prominent member of the Arab Academy, Damascus. Graduate of Syrian University, faculties of law, arts and sciences. Also holds a licence in literature from the Sorbonne. A teacher in the Government secondary school of Damascus, he later became an inspector of education. Leading member of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen and elected to Parliament in 1947 as their candidate. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as one of the candidates of the Islamic Socialist Front. Appointed Minister of Public Works in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. After Ma'arif Dawalibi's (*q.v.*) Cairo statement in April 1950 Muhammad Mubarak, together with Shaikh Mustafa al Sebai and the rest of the Islamic Socialist Front, began publicly to advocate a rapprochement between the Arab States and the Soviet Union, and called for a treaty of friendship between Syria and the Soviet Union. They have since ceased this clamour and have even made statements against Communism. At present they are allied with the People's Party.

**87. Mudarris, Muhammad Khalil**

Born 1894. Member of a family of wealthy Aleppo landowners who have a perpetual feud with the Jabris (*q.v.*). President of the Aleppo Cotton Spinning Company. Moderate in politics. Appointed Minister of Finance in the Ministry of Nassouhi al Bukhari (March-May 1939). Was several times consulted by Sheikh Taj ed Din in 1942 with a view to his becoming a Minister in the Syrian Government, but was reputed to have refused any office unless it was that of Prime Minister. He did not therefore become a member of the Cabinet. His brother, Ahmed, was elected Deputy 1943. Industrious and well respected; is a friend of Jamil Mardam Bey and Edmond Homsy.

**88. Muhammad, Said Agha**

Born at Amouda 1899. A Sunni Moslem Kurd and religious fanatic. Writes some Arabic, speaks Turkish and Kurdish. Chief of Dakourieh tribe. Took a leading part in Christian massacres in 1937; fled to Iraq, but returned in 1942. Wrote a letter calling on Kurds in the name of their religion to fight the British. Elected Deputy for Qunichlié in 1943. Strong and unruly, but influential in his district.

**89. Muhasin, Fuad**

Born in Damascus in 1902. Studied law in Syria. Practised for four years as a lawyer. Became a judge in 1926 and a member of the High Court of Appeal later. Worked as a Secretary at the Presidency under Shukri Qawatli. Became Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior in 1948.

Hates foreigners and is disliked by Syrian officials. He possesses a gift for making himself indispensable and managed to keep his post during the Shukri and Zaim régimes of 1949. He was dismissed by the Atassi Government in August 1949. Appointed Mohafez of the Jebel Druze in April 1951.

**90. Mujib bin Muhaid, Amir**

Born about 1885. Bedouin chief, head of the Fedaan Wuld tribe in the Jezirah and Euphrates region. Given the title of Amir and awarded the Legion of Honour by the French in 1921 on the model of the chiefs of the Rualla. Deputy for Jezirah in 1936, 1943 and 1947. Had well-armed forces and was supported by the French though he was careful not to offend the British. Of considerable importance but unpleasant, cold and astute in character, and likely to turn any emergency to his

advantage. His eldest son, Nouri, who was elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, lacks his father's dignity and astuteness.

**91. Murabit, Jawad**

Born 1905, graduated from the Law College, Damascus, and the Sorbonne. 1925-26 secretary of the Mixed Tribunals at Damascus, 1926-28 secretary of Damascus Municipal Council, 1928-29 chief of Municipal Technical Office, 1929-37 chief of Diwan of the Administrative Governor of Damascus, 1937-38 Chief of Police, Lattakia, 1930-40 Director in the Ministry of Interior, 1940-41 secretary of the Council of Directors and Director of Press and Information, 1942 Mohafez of Deir-az-Zor, Mohafez of Hauran for a few months in 1942, inspector of the Ministry of Interior 1943-45, Director of Administration in Ministry for Foreign Affairs November 1944 to March 1946, Mohafez of Damascus Province 1946-49. Reverted to Pilgrimage Directorate April 1947. He has on several recent occasions been Director of the Pilgrimage. Though a somewhat fanatical Moslem he is an active freemason and a leading brother in the Scottish Lodge at Damascus. Strongly anti-Communist. Appointed Syrian Minister to Saudi Arabia in January 1950.

**92. Murhij, Farid**

Born Hama about 1900. Greek Orthodox. Wealthy landowner of Hama, who habitually indulges in smuggling. Cultivates friendship of Moslems, with whom he is well established. Enjoys support of Bishop Hureiki (*q.v.*). Deputy for Hama 1943 and Controller in the Chamber of Deputies October 1945 to October 1946.

An attractive personality but entirely self interested. Elected to Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

**93. Murshid, Rakkan Shaikh**

Born about 1905. Bedouin chief. Head of the small but predatory Saba's tribe (Bteinat), which is usually encamped in the Salimiyeh district. Deputy for the Damascus tribes 1936-39. A sheikh after the novelist's heart. Generous to the poor but a fierce ruler. Realises that the nomadic life of the Bedouins is doomed to extinction and is now actively sedentarising his people. Elected Deputy for Palmyra tribal area 1943 and in 1947. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

**94. Nazif, Amin**

Born 1904 in Damascus. Moslem. Educated at Salamia Agricultural School, (near Hama) and later at Montpellier in France. He also studied for a time at Ohio University.

After completing his studies he was a teacher at the Salamia Agricultural School for 3 years (1926-29), when he was appointed to the Department of Agriculture as Head of Plant Protection, a position which he held until 1939. He was then appointed Director *per interim* of Trade and Agriculture in the Ministry of National Economy (the Ministry at that time included the Department of Agriculture). In 1948, when an independent Ministry of Agriculture was established, Amin Nazif was made Director of Agriculture and in January 1951 was promoted to Director-General.

He is able and efficient, and much of the progress in the conduct of agricultural affairs in Syria to-day is due to his work, for which he has been awarded the Syrian Order of Merit. He speaks good English and French. He is a pleasant little man, very friendly and obliging.

**95. Nizamuddin, Abdul Baqi**

Born 1903 in the Nassibain, Turkey, where his father was Kuimakan. Elementary education. Is

recognised as a political leader of Moslems in the Jezirah. Was elected Deputy in 1943 with French support, but since then has professed strong independent Arab views, and was re-elected in 1947. Owns large properties, from which he draws his income. Reported to have sympathised with the revolt of Rashid Ali in Iraq. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Minister of Agriculture in Khalid al Azm's Cabinet of December 1949. Formed the Republican Liberal *bloc* in the Assembly in March 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Appointed Minister of Agriculture and Acting Minister of Justice in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951.

**96. Qanbar, Ahmed**

An Aleppo lawyer. Leading member of the Aleppo branch of the People's Party. Owner of *Al Nahir* the organ of the People's Party in Aleppo. First elected to Parliament in 1947. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Appointed Minister of Public Works in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

**97. Qudmani, Foad**

Born Damascus about 1900. As a result of serving as a clerk in a lawyer's office, was "tolerated" as a lawyer about 1920. Of no importance until he became member of Shahbandar Party in 1938. Remaining loyal to his chief, when latter was murdered, he shared with Babil (*q.v.*) the leadership of the party.

Elected Dean of the Damascus Bar in October 1942 to 1944 after elections, whose validity was challenged by his opponents.

Not very intelligent and rather unpopular, and a very doubtful friend of the British, whom he attacked at the time of the Palestine partition issue in the Security Council. Tried to organise an opposition to Nationalist Government, 1944. President of the Damascus Bar Association 1946-49. Re-elected in 1950. Since the fall of Zaim's régime has come out as a strong supporter of Shukri Quwatli and advocate of his return to Syria. Defended Muir Ajlani (*q.v.*) when the latter was on trial early in 1951 for conspiracy against the State.

**98. Qudsi, Nazim**

Born 1906 in Aleppo. Lawyer. Active during troubles of February 1936. Resigned from Nationalist *bloc* March 1939 and has since been in opposition to the *bloc*. Considered suitable in 1941 as British propagandist, but refused pay. Suggested for position in Syrian Cabinet in March 1942, but his candidature was ruled out by the Allies on account of his past xenophobic record. Elected Deputy in July 1943 and in 1947, and worked with Rushdi Kekhia (*q.v.*) as reasonable critic of Government; refused Cabinet rank. Minister Plenipotentiary to United States January 1945 to August 1946. Member of Syrian Delegation to U.N.O. Conference at San Francisco April 1945. Member of Syrian Delegation to U.N.O. Conference at London November 1945. Prominent member of Popular Party. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Hashim Atassi's Government of August 1949. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Formed a Cabinet in December 1949, after Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakly's military *coup*, but resigned after less than twenty-four hours as he would not submit to army pressure. Subsequently elected by the Assembly as chairman of the committee which was formed to draft the new Constitution. At the beginning of June 1950 formed a Cabinet in succession to that of Khalid al Azm, with army support. A serious-minded, upright and sincere little man who, however,

42629

nurses deep-rooted suspicions of French and American designs on the Middle East as a whole and Syria in particular. By contrast he is well-disposed towards Britain, whom he trusts considerably more than the other Big Powers. As a result of differences with the military clique led by Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakly, which he attributed mainly to French intrigues, Nazim Qudsi resigned on 9th March, 1951. After the fall of Zaim in 1949 Qudsi strongly advocated union with Iraq but he has since become more cautious and in December 1950 submitted to the Arab League a much broader plan for the unity of Arab States.

**99. Quwatli, Shukri**

Born about 1886. Supporter of Faisal. During the rebellion of 1925 afforded every assistance to the rebels. He fled to Palestine, but returned to Syria in 1931. Vice-president of the Nationalist *bloc* at its inception. Made Finance Minister and Defence Minister (combined) in Jamil Mardam's Cabinet on 21st December, 1936. As head of his own party (Istiklal), but allied with the Nationalists, was bitterly opposed to Council of Directors, but until French armistice (June 1940) did not take overt political action. He was in close contact with the Italian Disarmament Commission during the whole of their stay here and was a constant caller on the Italian Consulate in Damascus. Met Roser, the German Agent, several times during the latter's stay in Syria. On arrival of Allies was openly opposed to them and judged it best to go on "pilgrimage" to Mecca (October 1941). Went to Bagdad, where he was entrusted by Ibn Saud with various negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Returned to Damascus (September 1942). Entered elections of 1943 as Nationalist leader. Elected Deputy and President of the Republic by overwhelming majority. Fell seriously ill (April 1944); his life was saved by British military doctors with transfusions of British blood. Visited Bagdad in March 1945, where he was not warmly received. Attended meeting of Arab rulers at Inshass in May 1946. Re-elected President for a second term in April 1948. After that his popularity declined rapidly and he was incapable of appreciating the progressive economic policy initiated by Khaled el Azm later that year. He was arrested by Husni Zaim on 30th March, 1949, and resigned on 6th April. He has since then lived in Switzerland and Egypt where he now is.

A determined exponent of pan-Arabism. Is somewhat slow and ponderous. Has not got a quick or brilliant brain but has a good deal of wisdom. Mentally and physically he might not unfairly be likened to an elephant. Made quite a good representative head of State. Was regarded in the early days of the war as pro-Axis and undoubtedly had contacts with Axis representatives in the Levant, but this can probably be attributed to entire single-mindedness of purpose in the Arab cause. It was at one time rumoured, but there is no proof, that he had used his official position to advance his own financial interests. In 1945 and 1946 he co-operated well with the British authorities and he almost certainly has a sense of profound gratitude towards the British both politically and personally. This is not to say that he might not take a line opposed to British policy if he thought Arab interests lay that way. Is not, unnaturally, profoundly opposed to any suggestion for a monarchical régime in Syria.

**100. Ra'ad, Henri**

Born 1902 in Alexandretta. Christian. Studied at the Ecoles des Frères Chrétiens at Beirut, where he obtained a high diploma in economics, and later graduated from the French Law School at Beirut.

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In 1922 he entered Government service in the Accounts Department, and was subsequently promoted to be Inspector of Finance in the Alexandretta District. Transferred to Damascus some years later as Acting Secretary-General in the Diwan of Accounts. In about 1941 he was appointed Director-General of the Ministry of Finance and early in 1947 was promoted to Secretary-General of the Ministry.

A capable and solid type of civil servant. Rather quiet in manner. Speaks French fluently, but very little English although he is able to read and understand it fairly well.

#### 101. Rayyis, Munir

Born Hama in 1899. Sunni. Cousin of Najib (*q.v.*). Strong Nationalist. Joined Palestine rebels in 1936 and became second in command to Fauzi Qawekji. Appointed head of the Secret Police (*i.e.*, political) by the Nationalist Government in 1938 and in that capacity aided Palestine rebels. Dismissed a few months later on charges of brutality. Condemned to twenty years' prison and twenty years' banishment for plotting against life of Bahij al Khatib (head of Council of Directors) in 1939, but released in 1940 at intervention of Italian Armistice Commission. Fleed in June 1941 on Allied approach and broadcast for Germans from Athens; returned to Syria at the end of 1945; is sole proprietor of the newspaper *Baradu*, which during the Zaim régime changed its name to *Inqilab*.

A dangerous agitator and intriguer, associated with the Arab Club, League of National Action. Spearheaded the attacks in the Damascus press on Syro-Iraqi union after the fall of Zaim, whom he had fulsomely supported. Given his character, it is certain that the Saudi and Egyptian opponents of union made it worth his while. A thoroughly contemptible, venal and unscrupulous scoundrel. Anglophobe.

#### 102. Rayyis, Najib

Cousin of Munir (*q.v.*). Born Hama 1898. Sunni. Proprietor and editor of *Qabas*, a strongly Nationalist organ. His paper has been suspended at various times for its violent attitude, notably in 1938 for its attitude towards the Palestine troubles. In 1939 condemned to twenty years' prison and twenty years' banishment for implication in plot to murder Bahij al Khatib (head of Council of Directors). Amnestied November 1940 on intervention of Italian Armistice Commission. In Vichy year was anti-Allied. Arrested, but soon released by Allies in February 1942. Rearrested in June 1942 for his share in Jamil Mardam's (*q.v.*) false claims to Allied support. Released March 1943. Elected Deputy for Damascus on Shukri Quwatli's list in 1943; member of journalists' delegation which visited London in July 1945. A strong Nationalist, he and his paper now support the National Party.

#### 103. Rifai, Ahmad

Born in Aleppo about 1907, studied political economy in Vienna. A member of the Constituent Assembly in 1938 but subsequently gave up politics, concentrating on the administration of his large estate near Aleppo. Elected Deputy in 1947 on the list of the Parliamentary Popular Party. He is a brother-in-law of Abdul Rahman Azzam Pasha, their wives being sisters. He is a man of considerable influence in Aleppo, where his family are large landowners. Appointed Minister of Public Works in Jamil Mardam's Government in October 1947 and in this capacity showed himself to be a complete obstructionist on any matter of development or contracts with foreign companies. He spends much of his time in Aleppo.

#### 104. Rikkabi, Akram

Born 1900. Son of the late General Rida Pasha Rikkabi, C.B.E. (Governor of Damascus after the British occupation in 1918).

Educated in Iraq and at Cambridge University where he took a degree in agriculture. Appointed Director-General of National Economy in 1945 but resigned in 1946. Manager of Rafidain Bank 1949-50. Appointed Director-General of Customs in October 1950. Dismissed in June 1951 and appointed Director-General of the Hejaz Railway. Supporter of the People's Party and well-disposed towards Britain. Efficient and honest but less effective than he thinks. Favours a closer association between Syria and Iraq and is opposed to any intervention by the Army in Syrian politics. As a result he is viewed with considerable suspicion by the military clique.

#### 105. Sadat, Munir Dr.

Born 1903. Moslem. Educated at the Syrian University where he took a degree in medicine. Later specialised in surgery in France. Founder and owner of a well-known private hospital in Damascus in which his wife, a Finn, handles much of the administration. Politically he has frequently changed horses in an effort to gain Parliament. Originally a member of the old Liberal Party he clung to the People's Party when the two were fused. Before elections, however, he deserted them and joined an Independent list with Saadi Kailani (*q.v.*). Appointed Director-General of Health in October 1950 and in that capacity visited England under British Council auspices in 1951. Does not appear to be a man of outstanding character or principle but nevertheless he does have the knack of getting things done.

#### 106. Sahnouli, Jean

Born about 1905. Greek Catholic of humble extraction, one of seven brothers, all of whom are now wealthy. Appointed honorary Spanish Vice-Consul in 1936. Because prominent in Greek Catholic circles was considered pro-Italian, but in year following French collapse showed considerable signs of being pro-British. In April to September 1941 was Minister of Finance in Khalid al Azm's Government. During winter of 1941-42 was engaged in large contracts for British army over which he was not too well treated—but has nevertheless made a great deal of money. Represented Syrian Chamber of Commerce at the Commercial Conference held in Chicago in 1945. Left Damascus in May for a lengthy private commercial tour of the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. His visit to the United Kingdom was strongly backed by the Department of Overseas Trade. Managing director of Syrian Airlines and of big sugar and glass companies and interested in the formation of a National Bank. Although not a politician accepted post as Minister of National Economy in Khalid al Azm's Cabinet of December 1948 (which fell on 30th March, 1949) and showed himself a progressive and thoughtful Minister anxious to promote commercial relations between Syria and the outside world.

Is an extremely unsatisfactory business man to deal with, putting off any decision to the last possible moment; amiable personality, close personal friend of Khalid al Azm and open to social flattery.

#### 107. Said, Amin

Born about 1900. He studied law and then worked as a journalist in Cairo. He returned to Syria with Dr. Shahbandar and opened a newspaper called *Kifah*, which continued to appear until April 1949, when it was suppressed by Zaim. Its editorial policy was always moderate and friendly towards the United

Kingdom. It became and remained openly pro-British after December 1948, when Said returned from an official tour in England.

Said to possess an extraordinary memory which has helped him in writing a number of books on contemporary Arab history, of which he has encyclopaedic knowledge. He is sometimes surly and bad-tempered but entirely loyal to his political friends. His paper recommenced publication in November 1949. Bitterly anti-French.

#### 108. Sawwaf, Husni

Born 1900. Moslem. Studied at the American University of Beirut and afterwards taught there until 1947 as Professor of Economics. Counsellor at the Syrian Legation in Washington 1947-49 during which time he took his Ph.D. at George Washington University. Appointed Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Economy in April 1949.

One of the very few Syrian administrative officials who can be counted on to give a balanced view on some of the many economic problems affecting Syria. He has a quiet, agreeable manner.

#### 109. Sayigh, Maximus IV

Born in 1878. Archbishop of Tyre in 1919 and of Beirut in 1922. Elected Patriarch of the Greek Catholic Church in the East in succession to Moghabghab in October 1947 by the Synod of the Greek Catholic Church meeting at 'Ain Traz in the Lebanon. He is well liked by the Greek Catholic community and has decided to live in Damascus though he may spend a part of his time in Cairo and Alexandria, where he has palaces. Has on several occasions delivered anti-Communist sermons, and often intrigues in local politics.

#### 110. Sha'alan, Fawwaz Amir

Born about 1907. Grandson of Nuri, whom he succeeded on latter's death in 1942. Even before he became chief, had a strong following in the Ruwalla. Treacherously slew his rival and cousin, Farhan bin Mashur, near Palmyra in April 1935. Has married both his sisters into Ibn Saud's family, one to Ibn Saud himself and the other to the Amir Saud. These matches are looked upon by the Bedouin as having a political significance in connexion with the Wadi Sirhan grazing lands and the Jaul Oasis. Was Deputy 1936-39 under the Nationalist banner.

During the British blockade of Vichy Syria (1941) conducted a remunerative contraband trade between Transjordan and Syria. During Syrian campaign he and the Ruwalla remained strictly neutral, although the Vichy French gave them a number of arms, which they largely surrendered on the Allied arrival in Damascus. In 1942 he was given profitable contracts by the British army. Elected Deputy for Bedouins of Damascus area 1943, and again in 1947; visited America at the time of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, April 1945, and spent a month in England on his way back.

Like all Bedouin, a shameless money-seeker. Despite the fact that much of his earlier life was spent in Syrian and European cabarets, he is now a more dignified character, respected by the other tribal leaders and has become a leading force in the desert. His close connexions with Ibn Saud result in him being the only big tribal leader who is definitely opposed to Greater Syria. Played an important part in Ibn Saud's covert campaign against Syro-Iraqi union after Colonel Sami Hinnawi's *coup d'Etat* of August 1949. Vanished from Syria shortly before the unsuccessful attempt by a group of terrorists called the Arab Redemption Society, whom he was probably financing on behalf of King Ibn Saud, against the life of Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakli (*q.v.*) in October 1950.

#### 111. Shalhoub, George

Age about 45. Syrian Catholic of Damascus. Doctor of medicine and graduate of the Jesuit College, Beirut. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1949. Member of Popular Party. Minister of Public Works in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Appointed Minister of Health when Nazim Qudsi reformed his Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951.

#### 112. Sharabati, Ahmad

Born about 1909 of humble origin. Student in the American University of Beirut. B.Sc., C.E., from M.I.T. (United States). Speaks, besides Arabic, English, French, German and Turkish. Spent some time in the United States and collected money in the Arab cause, establishing Society for Arab Propaganda. Returned to Syria in 1930 and started tobacco-growing and other industrial enterprises in Transjordan and Syria. In 1931-32 established the League of National Action. From 1935 to 1939 worked as contractor in Egypt and Iraq. Drew the unfavourable attention of the French in 1939 by delivering speeches urging national unity and was sentenced with other members of the League of National Action to twenty years' imprisonment and twenty years' deportation. Fleed to Transjordan, where he started a fishery at Akaba. Returned to Syria when the British occupied Damascus in 1941 and resumed his political activities with the League of National Action. Has remained a firm supporter of Shukri Quwatli and was elected Deputy for Damascus in August 1943 and again in 1947; March 1945 was Minister of Education in Fares el Khoury's first Government; Minister of Education and Acting Minister of National Economy in Fares el Khoury's second Government, April to August 1945; Minister of Education and National Economy in Fares el Khoury's third Government for a few days in 1945. Minister of Education in Saadullah Jabri's third Government, April 1946, but was transferred to Ministry of National Defence in June 1946 after the resignation of Nebih Azmeh. Minister of Defence December to October 1947 and again in October 1947 to 23rd May, 1948, when he was asked by the President to resign. Was at this time in close touch with the American Legation but estranged them by injudicious but popular anti-American sentiments during the Palestine War. Was agent in Syria for General Motors, whose cars he sold to Government departments. Is alleged to have made large sums of money on arms deals for the Palestine wars and as a result is disliked by the mob, who burnt his show-room in the November 1949 demonstrations. Under the Zaim régime, having fled the country, he was accused of misappropriation of funds and his property was put in the hands of the legal custodian.

Although he is quite wild, he has considerable drive and managed to retain the confidence of Shukri Bey Quwatli until the Syrian army entered Palestine and its shortcomings were obvious for all to see. He is married to a Lithuanian cabaret girl, whom he is alleged to have met in Tel Aviv. Returned to Damascus in November 1949 after having been cleared of all charges by a court of enquiry set up after the fall of Zaim. Arrested in October 1950 on charges of belonging to a group of terrorists called the Arab Redemption Society following an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakli (*q.v.*). He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment by a military tribunal in March 1951 but the sentence was subsequently repealed and he was acquitted.

**113. Sharif, Ihsan**

Born about 1892. Lawyer. French degree (*à titre d'étranger*). Secretary of the People's Party 1924. Member of the Constituent Assembly 1928, when he held most uncompromising Nationalist views. Insisted on standing for elections in 1932, thus nearly spoiling the agreement with the High Commissioner's delegate. Nationalist Deputy, 1932 and 1936. Appointed Syrian member on Joint Higher Commission for Common Interests with Lebanese, January to September 1944. Mohafez of Aleppo, September 1944 to May 1946, during which period he was successful in preventing any major clash between Syrians and French. Earned the gratitude of the Christian minorities for protecting their interests, for which he was decorated by the Pope. Appointed first Syrian Minister to the Turkish Republic, July 1946. Syrian representative on Security Council Committee of Enquiry to Greece, January 1947. Appointed Syrian Minister to Greece in September 1947. A man of sincere convictions with a violent temper. A minor Nationalist leader, who has, however, not been active for some time. Recalled to Damascus in August 1949. Secretary-general of the Republican Democratic (pro-Ouwatly) Party formed in February 1950.

**114. Shebat, Anis**

Born 1908 in Damascus. Christian. Younger brother of Fuad Shebat (*q.v.*). Educated at the Orthodox and Lazarist Schools in Damascus, and later obtained a degree in Civil Engineering at the Beirut Engineering College after which he entered Government Service.

His first appointment in 1929 was with the technical office of the Public Works Department at Damascus. He was promoted in 1936 to be Chief of the office, a position which he held until 1944. He was then appointed Chief Engineer for the Southern area, and in 1949 promoted to Director of Communications in the Ministry of Public Works and Communications, and also Director of the Department of Concessionary Companies.

A capable civil servant. Speaks fluent French and fairly good English.

**115. Shebat, Fuad**

Brother of Anis Shebat (*q.v.*). He and his brother owe much of their success to hard and diligent work and the influence and support of the Orthodox Patriarchate with the French Mandatory Government. Fuad Shebat took a Doctorate of Law at a French University and later became a Professor of Law at the Syrian University. He first entered Government service in 1931 and was employed in the Prime Minister's office, Accounts Department; he was also an advisory member of the Council of State.

He is one of the most efficient and respected officials the Government possesses and has for some time done good work as the Director of the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to having published at least four books on law and administration he has recently been complimented in his official capacity by the Prime Minister in Parliament for his work in drafting the new Syrian Nationality Law. He is a prominent member of the Greek Orthodox Community and is also a member of the Church Council. Visited England under British Council auspices 1951. Friendly to Britain.

**116. Shehabi, Bahjat Amir**

Born about 1885. Moslem. Cousin of Mustafa (*q.v.*). Studied law in Constantinople. Given an appointment in the Damascus police during the Faisal régime, but dismissed by the French. Elected head of the Damascus Bar in 1934-36. Mohafiz of the Jezireh 1937. President of the Damascus Court of Appeal 1938, but resigned a few months later to

resume his practice. Appointed Mohafiz of Damascus town, February 1947, dismissed by Zaim in May 1949. Member of Iraq Defence Committee (May 1941) organised to collect money and recruits for Iraq rising. An influential Nationalist, and lawyer.

**117. Shehabi, Mustafa Amir**

Born in Damascus 1893. Of Lebanese origin (Hasbaya). Cousin of Amir Bahjat (*q.v.*). Studied at one of the French schools in Damascus, at Istanbul and at the Agricultural School of Châlons, France. Lieutenant under Faisal and Inspector of Agriculture. Took flight when Faisal was forced to withdraw from Syria. Returned to Syria in 1923, when he was appointed Director of State Domains. In 1934 his position as Director of State Domains was suppressed and Shehabi was attached to the Ministry of Agriculture by Sheikh Taj ed Din. In 1935 he was one of the directors of the Damascus Exhibition, and in 1936 (February to December) was Minister of Education under Ata Bey Ayoubi. He accompanied the Syrian delegation to Paris for the negotiation of the Franco-Syrian Treaty (1936). Mohafez of Aleppo (February 1937 to March 1939) under the Cabinet of Jamil Mardam, after which he went into retirement, devoting his time to compiling an Arabic-French botanical dictionary. Appointed Minister of Finance in the Jamil Ulshi Government on 8th January, 1943. Resigned on personal grounds on 17th March, 1943. Was appointed Minister of Finance, National Economy and Ravitaillement in Ata Ayoubi's Provisional Government, March to August 1943. Mohafez of Lattakia 1943 to 1945. Secretary-General of Prime Minister's Office, December 1945 to June 1946. Appointed Mohafez of Aleppo, June 1946 to January 1948, when he was transferred to Lattakia as Mohafez, Minister of Justice in Muhsin Barazi's Cabinet of June 1949. Enjoys reputation as a man of probity and drive. An agreeable personality, modest in demeanour but can be very obstinate.

Appointed Syrian Minister to Cairo in June 1951.

**118. Shishakli, Adib Lieutenant-Colonel**

Born 1901 in Hama. Took part in the Hama revolt against the French in 1925 and in 1945 deserted the French forces and joined the Syrian army. Battalion Commander in 1948 and in September of that year appointed second-in-command of a brigade. Took part in Husni Zaim's *coup d'Etat* of 30th March, 1949. Appointed Director-General of Police and Security soon after, and promoted to rank of lieutenant-colonel a few days later. Leader of the Parti Populaire Syrien in the army. Shishakli fell foul of Husni Zaim when the latter made him hand over Antoun Saade, head of the P.P.S., to the Lebanese authorities in July 1949, after asylum had been granted to Saade in Syria. As a result of their quarrel he was first relegated to the appointment of Commandant de la Place, Aleppo, then offered the post of Military Attaché, Jeddah, which he refused, and finally dismissed by Zaim at the end of July. Reinstated by the late Colonel Hinnawi after the latter's successful *coup* against Husni Zaim and appointed commander of the 1st Brigade. On 19th December, 1949, Shishakli took matters into his own hands and in collaboration with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*) organised a successful *coup* (he called it "disciplinary action") against Hinnawi. Shishakli, an avowed Republican, accused Hinnawi of plotting to bring about union with Iraq. Became Deputy Chief of the General Staff on the day of his *coup*. Since then has managed to maintain a firm control on the political situation in Syria and is the real power in the country at present. Became Chief of Staff in April 1951.

He is married and has eight children. At first glance a quiet, shy little man, he is inclined to get tough after a drink or two and, as a result, thoroughly enjoys an evening's carousing in the cabarets. Although outwardly pleasant and amicable he is shrewd, very cunning and ruthless. He is out to strengthen his own position and sees in any project for closer association between Syria and her Hashimite neighbours a threat to his own position.

**119. Sibai, Hani**

Moslem, born about 1902. Lawyer, judge and Deputy for Homs 1943 and again in 1947. With Hilmi Atassi formed a strong opposition movement to the Government; has a certain oratorical skill and impudence in public debate and does not hesitate to speak his mind in the House. Member of the Popular Party. Almost penniless in his capacity as a judge, he has had recourse many times to those legal adjustments for money so necessary among underpaid Syrian officials. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Appointed Minister of Education in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Appointed Minister of Education in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951. As Minister of Education was a most unco-operative and difficult person to deal with. An unattractive man without personality.

**120. Sibai, Mustafa Shaikh**

Born in Homs about 1915. Studied at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, where he was when Rashid Ali's rebellion took place. He was accused of having distributed a circular in Cairo calling on the Egyptian people to support the movement, was arrested by the Egyptian police and detained for some two months without trial; deported from Egypt and interned by the British authorities in Palestine at Sarafand for seven months. Repatriated to Syria, where he was again interned for two years, first at Mich-Mich and then at Rashid; released early 1945, when he began to take a strong interest in the Moslem Brethren. Since 1946 he has been director of the Arab Institute in Damascus (a school run by the Moslem Brethren). He is now controller-general of the Moslem Brethren in both Syria and the Lebanon, and was one of the principal editors of *El Manar* newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Moslem Brethren until its suppression in April 1949. *El Manar* reappeared in November 1949.

Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as chief representative of the newly-formed Islamic Socialist Front (= Moslem Brethren) of which he is the main spokesman. In 1950 together with Muhammad Mubarak (*q.v.*) publicly advocated a rapprochement with the Soviet Union but he has now given up this line. His party is now an ally of the People's Party. A vehement ranting orator who appeals to the masses.

**121. Sidawi, Wadi'**

Born Damascus 1907. Greek Orthodox. Took law degree, Damascus 1925. Worked as assistant for seventeen years to Yusuf el Isa on the paper *Alef Ba*, and in 1942 bought *Al Kifah* from Amin Said, but abandoned it in early 1943 to its original proprietor; editor of *El Nasr*. Speaks English and French. Was pro-Allied during the second world war but has since developed a greed for money which results in his newspaper vilifying anyone or any Government for a sufficient payment. In the first half of 1948 *El Nasr* was particularly anti-British over Palestine, and closely followed the changes in Communist treatment of news. The advent of Husni

Zaim brought an era of unprecedented prosperity for Sidawi. *El Nasr* became one of the unofficial mouthpieces of the dictator and it is more than likely that Sidawi's present financial independence is the outcome of his wholehearted support of Zaim. He has undoubtedly some ability as a journalist and his paper has the highest sales in Damascus. His opportunism has become even more apparent since the second and third *coups d'Etat*. His paper has taken a fellow-traveller line on many issues recently. It is often alleged that he receives money from the Soviet Legation and the Banque de Syrie.

**122. Sila, Fawzi Colonel**

Born about 1895. Moslem from Hama. Commandant Homs Military School in February 1947. In July 1948 made Joint Operational Commander of the 1st and 2nd Brigades on the Palestine front. Head of Syrian delegation during the Syro-Israeli Armistice negotiations in 1949. Appointed Director-General of Ministry of National Defence in April 1950. Minister of National Defence in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950, and in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951. He is Minister of Defence only in name, however, as the real power lies in the hands of Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakli (*q.v.*).

Smooth and foxy, but does not appear to want to get mixed up in politics.

**123. Stati, Georgis**

Born about 1884. Of Homs. Syrian Catholic Bishop of Damascus (1933). Not a fanatical Christian, i.e., he can bear sight of Christians not members of his church. Is an ardent defender of the "minorities" cause. Generally esteemed. Pro-British during the Vichy régime.

**124. Sulh, Afif**

Born Saida (Lebanon) 1890. Studied law at Istanbul, but does not practise. Interested in politics and opposed the Turks before the 1914 war, during which he was Turkish officer. Accused of giving the names of the Arabs hanged by Jemal Pasha, but no proof forthcoming. Sent on a mission by M. de Jouvenel to Jebel Druse in 1926 to negotiate with leaders of the revolt. At that time, was one of the leading Nationalists willing to co-operate with the French. Organiser of the Nationalist Party in 1927. Took an active part in organising the general strike in January 1936. Was exiled by the French, but was amnestied with others in March of the same year. Deputy for Damascus, 1936 and 1943. Minister to Bagdad 1947-49. Not a man of much personality.

**125. Surur, Hayyil Shaikh**

Born in 1913. Educated by private teachers in Beduin encampment. In 1947 he inherited from his father, Auda Surur, the leadership of the Musaid tribe which is the largest Beduin group in the Jebel Druse district. He was exiled by the French in 1936 but returned in time to be elected as a Deputy in the Syrian Parliament of 1937. The French would not allow him, however, to take his seat on the grounds that he was too young. In 1939 he migrated with his tribe to Transjordan to avoid further trouble with the Mandatory Power. Failed in the Syrian elections of 1943 but succeeded in 1947. In 1948 he led his tribesmen into Palestine and succeeded in holding Lydda and Ramleh for several weeks until regular forces from Transjordan took over. Although serving under the Jordanian Command he was the only Beduin leader to take an active part in the fighting in Palestine. The Syrian Government whose regular troops had not succeeded so well as Hayyil's Beduin, arrested him on his return to Damascus. He then joined the Popular

Party in opposition to Shukri Quwatly and the Nationalists. He attempted to lead all Beduin Deputies into the opposition but failed.

He was arrested by Zaim in April 1949 and remained in prison for several weeks.

He is shrewd, witty and possesses much common sense. He is openly pro-British. His personal conduct is strictly regulated by Beduin ethics. Elected to Constituent Assembly in November 1949.

#### 126. Tallas, Assad

Born in Aleppo about 1905. Educated at Fuad I University, Cairo, and later studied in France. Took up teaching and then obtained a post in the Syrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and became head of the Administrative Section. Was at one time Director of Consular Affairs and served in diplomatic posts abroad including Tehran and Athens, where he was chargé d'affaires. While at Athens he was appointed Syrian member of the United Nations Commission in Greece. On his return to Syria he was given a post in the Legal Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Tallas accompanied Adel Arslan (*q.v.*) to Bagdad on an official mission during Zaim's régime and while there secretly discussed with the Iraqis the possibility of overthrowing Zaim and bringing about closer relations between Syria and Iraq. On his return to Damascus he began to work upon the late Colonel Hinnawi, to whom he was related by marriage and on whom he exerted a powerful influence. Zaim offended Tallas by transferring him to a minor post in the Ministry of Education in July and this set Tallas firmly and finally against him. Following Hinnawi's successful *coup d'Etat* against Zaim, Tallas became Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and exploited his position to promote Syro-Iraqi union, using the rather stupid Hinnawi as a tool for this purpose. His career was abruptly interrupted on 19th December by the anti-Hinnawi *coup* carried out by Lieut.-Colonel Adib Shishakli and Tallas, after taking refuge in the Iraqi Legation, fled to Bagdad via Beirut. He continues to remain a refugee in Bagdad.

#### 127. Tarazi, Falak (Miss)

Aged about 35. Comes of an old and respected family of Turkish origin. Her father was a Government official during Ottoman days and a land owner on a modest scale. She is well educated and has absorbed French culture to a great degree not only in her education but also in the course of her frequent sojourns in Paris. She gives the appearance of being of independent means and spends most of her time in lecturing and writing. Was until recently a regular weekly broadcaster over Radio Damascus where she spoke on sociology and allied subjects. She is something of an idealist and is usually considered as one of the leaders of a small group of Damascus *intelligentsia*. She has devoted considerable efforts to the organisation of the "Partisans of Peace" in Syria and visited Warsaw as a delegate to the Peace Conference in 1950. She has been largely responsible for the building up of the movement in Syria until her disagreement in June 1951 with the Committee, as a result of which her connexions with it have been allegedly cut. She denies

membership of the Communist Party but she was always known for her Leftist tendencies prior to her notoriety as a "Peace Partisan," and is certainly a fellow-traveller.

#### 128. Tayyara, Sami

Born in Homs. Age about 47. Comes of a humble family. Took a degree in medicine in France. Member of Akram Hourani's Arab Socialist Party and of the Liberal Republican *bloc* in Parliament. Appointed Minister of Health and Acting Minister of Public Works in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951.

#### 129. Yaziji, Taufiq

Born about 1893. Christian from Kalakh. Educated Sagleharb American High School. Left Syria for Cairo in 1940, when he was on the editorial staff of *El Hilal* and *El Ahran*. Has travelled in Europe and United States. Speaks English and French. Appointed second counsellor to Syrian Legation in Cairo, April 1945. Did not proceed. Left Syria for Egypt in July 1945 in connexion with the printing of the Syrian Black Book (record of alleged French misdeeds). On his return in August appointed Director of Arab Section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Returned to Cairo with Jamil Mardam, October 1945; transferred as Counsellor to Brazil, January 1946, and especially delegated to carry out pro-Arab propaganda in South America.

An unpleasant little man but intelligent.

#### 130. Zainuddin, Farid

Born about 1905. A Druse of Lebanese origin. Studied at American University, Beirut, specialising in economics, and later continued his studies in England and France (Doctor of Law, Paris, 1932). Acquired Syrian nationality and joined the Nationalist *bloc*. In July 1938 appointed Assistant Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. After fall of Nationalist Government, went to Beirut. Was a prominent member of the Arab Club in Damascus, the centre of pro-Nazi intrigue. In 1940-41 is believed to have been go-between for the Italian Armistice Commission and Shukri Quwatli. Arrested by Allies and interned until 1943. Director-General of Supply, January to November 1944. Syrian representative on General Supply Council, March 1944. Expert to Syrian delegation to U.N.O. Conference at San Francisco, April 1945. Syrian representative of Preliminary Committee and member of delegation to U.N.O. Conference in London, November 1945. Is believed to have lined his pockets while in Ministry of Supply. Appointed Minister to Moscow in 1947. Member of Syrian delegation to U.N.O. April and September 1947, and again in 1950. Appointed Head of the Permanent Syrian Delegation to the United Nations in June 1951 in place of Faris al Khouri (*q.v.*).

Is xenophobe in general and in the past was pronouncedly Anglophobe; his attitude towards the British now is not clear, but he has not ceased to resent his internment in Mich-Mich. He and his wife speak excellent English and French.

EY 1902/13

No. 14

## SYRIA: HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Mr. Montagu-Pollock to Mr. Morrison. (Received 27th July)

(No. 115. Confidential) *Damascus*,  
Sir, 21st July, 1951.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the Annual Report on Heads of Missions accredited to Syria.

2. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Beirut, Alexandria and Bagdad.

I have, &c.

W. H. MONTAGU-POLLOCK.

Enclosure in No. 14

### Report on Heads of Foreign Missions in Syria

(Passages marked with an asterisk are reproduced from previous reports.)

#### Argentina

M. Adolfo Campodonico, Minister. (24th November, 1948.)

\*M. Campodonico is the first Argentine Minister to reside in Damascus. He came here from Costa Rica. It is not clear to anybody how he and a consul-general can be kept occupied. On his arrival he could speak nothing but Spanish but can now get on quite well in French. He has quite an agreeable wife. (Written in 1949.)

#### Egypt

M. Hussain Aziz, Minister. (1st April 1951.)

A friendly colleague who speaks good English. He is not very sociable, however, and in conversation is rather reserved.

#### France

M. Jacques Emile Paris, Minister. (8th June, 1950.)

Comes from Sofia and has not previously served in the Middle East. It is often difficult objectively to judge one's French colleagues in Damascus, owing to the deep-rooted French suspicion of British motives in Syria. Though he has considerable charm of manner, he has yet to give me a single piece of information or of advice of interest or value. Both he and his wife, who is a daughter of a former secretary-general of the Belgian Foreign Ministry, spend a large part of their time in Beirut and are clearly bored by Damascus, where most of the work of the French Legation seems to be performed by the counsellor.

#### Iraq

M. Mousa Shabandar, Minister. (27th June, 1950.)

Smooth and outwardly friendly. Has shown himself ready to co-operate with this legation by exchanging information. Has a Lebanese wife.

#### Italy

M. Umberto Natali, Minister. (12th October, 1950.)

A modest little man, with a nervous manner. His wife is Hungarian. They are both very friendly and ready to co-operate.

43531

#### Persia

M. Morteza Mochfegh Kazemi, Minister. (29th December, 1949.)

\*Friendly if rather uninspiring. Married. (Written in 1950.) I learn from Syrian officials that he has been caught out trafficking in gold.

#### Saudi Arabia

Shaikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Zaid, Minister. (25th June, 1944.) Also accredited to the Lebanon.

Doyen of the corps. Although he nominally lives in Damascus, he spends most of the winter in Beirut. Speaks no European language. A frail sick man who looks, and behaves, like a living corpse.

#### Turkey

M. Aptulihat Aksin, Minister. (26th June, 1946.)

\*M. Aksin came to Damascus from Buenos Aires, where he had spent some seven years. Naturally, as Turkish representative, his position is not an easy one, but he is not an impressive figure, and his conversation, in French, is extremely hard to follow. His wife is quite pleasant and seems to have benefited more from their sojourn in a foreign land than the minister has. (Written in 1948.) Turkish relations with Syria having considerably improved his position seems much easier. (Written in 1949.)

#### United States

Mr. Cavendish W. Cannon, Minister. (30th October, 1950.)

A career diplomat with considerable experience at the Balkan desk in the State Department, who was ambassador at Belgrade before being appointed to Damascus. I could hardly have a more co-operative, agreeable and helpful colleague. He is experienced and level-headed, and is determined that his legation shall work in Syria with the minimum of "splash." Has a great respect for British methods of diplomacy. A hard worker, but enjoys poor health. His wife, the Austrian daughter of a former Governor of Bosnia, is not without charm. But she is neurotic and always discontented with the post she is in, and consequently hardly smooths her husband's path.

#### Resident in Beirut

(Those marked with a dagger have secretaries or attachés resident in Damascus.)

#### Belgium

†Count Geoffrey d'Aspremont-Lynden, Minister. (6th January, 1947.)

#### Brazil

M. Carlos Martins Thompson Flores, Minister. (16th August, 1948.)

#### Chile

M. Luis E. Feliu, Minister. (16th December, 1950.)

#### Czechoslovakia

M. Karel Stanek, Chargé d'Affaires, *ad. i.* (13th October, 1947.)

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**Greece**

M. Nicolas Hadji Vassiliou, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.*  
(23rd May, 1950.)

**Mexico**

M. Antonio Méndez Fernandez, Minister. (4th  
October, 1950.)

**Soviet Union**

†M. Vassili Afanassievitch Belyaev, Minister.  
(3rd March, 1951.)

**Spain**

†Marquis de Castro de Torres, Minister. (21st  
May, 1949.)

**Switzerland**

Dr. Franz Kappeler, Minister. (8th January,  
1951.)

**Yugoslavia**

M. Ljubo Kovachevitch, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.*  
(26th April, 1951.)

**Resident in Cairo****Ethiopia**

M. Fitaorari Tafesse Habte Mikael, Minister.  
(31st July, 1949.)

**Norway**

M. Francis Irgens, Minister. (6th December, 1948.)

**Poland**

M. Stanislaw Bartnik, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.* (7th  
November, 1949.)

**Sweden**

Comte Gustav Bonde, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.* (12th  
May, 1951.)

**Resident in Bagdad****Afghanistan**

M. Ghulam Yahya Khan Tarzi, Minister. (2nd  
August, 1948.)